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AT HOME IN PARIS:

AND

A TRIP THROUGH THE VINEYARDS TO SPAIN.

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BY

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"TWO LIVES," ETC.

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TO

MONSIEUR BÉBÉ,

THE SUNLIGHT OF OUR "HOME IN PARIS,"

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.


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PREFACE.

It has appeared to the Author that a collection of the observations and studies he has made while "At Home in Paris" might be interesting, or, at least, amusing to many of the thousands of English people who now visit the great city of Boulevards. Some of these papers have been published in the *Athenæum*, and others in *Once a Week;* but many now appear for the first time.

W. B. J.

"The House we Lived in," Paris.
September, 1864.

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AT HOME IN PARIS.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE WE LIVED IN.

It could not strictly be called a house we lived in—it was a city, and a prodigiously populous one. Life teemed in every part of it—rolled in a torrent down its staircases, jutted out of every window. Neither by day nor by night did universal rest prevail in it. It included picturesque contrasts of fortune and misfortune; of breathless industry and languid idleness; of robust health, and lives that were a long disease. The seven ages of man were illustrated on every floor of it. It swarmed with children: it could have peopled three or four schools with ease, and left quite enough children behind for the comfort of the adult population. The animals that barked, and mewed, and screeched, and sang in it, would have been a good stock-in-trade for an animal fancier. To a quiet, uninitiated visitor it was a chaotic maze. The

passage by which he entered was a bustling scene. It was as public as the street, and looked more like a narrow thoroughfare than a way into a house. The wall was pierced, right and left, with doors innumerable: a butcher peeped out of one; from a second, a woman issued loaded with cooked dishes, more or less savoury; a third door led to a wine-shop billiard-table; and a fourth was the entrance to the establishment of a herbalist. Passing these few units of the vast population of our house, our visitor reached a door on the left that opened into the dark *conciergerie*. *Concierges'* boxes are usually gloomy; but that in which our Cerberus lived was extra dark. Indeed, the only light that came to it, was a gleam which shot down the high shaft at the side that went to the roof of the house. Our visitor would probably find nobody in the *concierge's* box; but Madame was close at hand under the shaft, and by a crazy pump; giving her close attention, on her knees, to the proceedings of the rats, which she was at liberty to observe through an opening by the pump, that led direct to the sewers. Whether she was an humble naturalist, given to the contemplation of the black and slimy quadrupeds who inhabited the sewers by troops, and kept high revels there under our house; or whether, seeing how frequently lodgers were

frightened on the staircases by rat-revels in the dead of night, she had been exasperated into a rage that knew no sleep, I was never able to discover. But this is truth: winter and summer did that patient *concierge* devote hours, gazing down that same sewer. She would allow nothing to impede her view; for when, in the depth of a severe winter, the aperture was covered with ice, she made the ice give way under her vigorous fists. She would just be good enough to divert her attention for a few moments, to confer with the postman, or answer the inquiries of our visitor. He was to pass the establishment of the photographer and the lodging of the *Sage-Femme*, on the *entresol*, and so reach that stage of dignity in the house—the first floor, where, flanked by a few families, we dwelt. A regiment of dragoons must have lived immediately over our heads, and must have worn their heaviest boots at home for our especial benefit. They made the mirrors shake against the walls. They were given to playing on the drum. At ghostly hours in the night, they stamped home, and, by way of exercise before going to bed, appeared to select the heaviest articles of furniture in their room for removal to the opposite corner of the room from that in which they found them. They were not only heavy and noisy themselves, but appeared to

select their friends for the force of their lungs and the weight of their tread. The only musical instrument that discoursed sweet music in their ear was the drum. Now, in the beating of the drum, there is the roll, the swell, the flam, and the ruffle. They were masters of them all. These were one set of our lodgers overhead, in their normal condition. Noise, and noise only, was their delight. When, on a certain evening, it was whispered through the cavernous passages of our interminable house that Monsieur Rataplan, of the second floor, was going to receive some friends in his studio, his immediate neighbours—above and under and about him—began to make all kinds of preparations, and assume those various attitudes of firmness which travellers by sea adopt, when the captain shakes his head, and says there is wind in the clouds. We all felt inclined to reef sail, clear decks, and make everything taut and trim for a hurricane. Our preparations were not in vain. Monsieur Rataplan did ample justice to his reputation. Morhoff mentions a certain Dutchman, of the name of Petter, who could break a glass with the sound of his voice: Rataplan must have had Petter among his guests. He was a man who must have been after Rataplan's own heart. It is my belief that he came to the famous *soirée* in question, accompanied by the Swiss

giantess, who was at that period exhibiting her redundant flesh at the great *Café* by the *Chateau d'Eau*. Now, Rataplan was an artist, and a lame artist; yet he was a man of most diabolical activity. We had been long in bed, and M. Rataplan had, I am sure, quite satisfied himself that we were fast asleep, when it occurred to his fertile imagination that a grand galop, provided it was danced by the heaviest of his guests, would be refreshing. In that dance the Swiss giantess stamped her hardest, while Petter put his reputation to the test, in the chorus. Our rooms vibrated like a ship in a heavy sea. Our neighbours met, in various stages of *demi-toilette*, to decide what could possibly be the nature of the entertainment that was proceeding on the second floor; and whether the house would be likely to last to the end of it. I am not sure that the more timid among the ladies did not deem it an act of prudence to shore up the more precious articles of their furniture. While a conference was proceeding on our floor, a scout perceived with consternation that all Monsieur Rataplan's visitors had not yet arrived. The thud of footsteps coming up the stairs, and the various preliminary flourishes of song in which the new arrivals indulged, warned us that the revel had not yet reached its height. In about half an hour a series

of unearthly noises, as of souls in agony, with demons laughing at and applauding them, struck upon the appalled ear. Monsieur Rataplan was having some private theatricals. I confess that we were all lost in conjecture as to the piece he had selected. The plot, however, must have included the destruction of a considerable quantity of heavy furniture; and some diabolical cruelties must have been practised upon the heroine, since she indulged in a series of sharp screams, of a quality so piercing that the east wind has ever since sounded low in my ears, like the humming of a bee. The storm was at its worst in the small hours; and so fearfully did it rage, that some timid ladies, who were wont to live on the quiet banks of the Lake of Como, rang, in their terror, for the *concierge*. This official, who appeared in a white sugar-loaf nightcap, agreed with the dwellers by the placid lake, that M. Rataplan's guests were not quite so quiet as they might be.

"Quiet!" exclaimed one of the ladies. "It must be a room full of madmen!"

The *concierge* smiled; holding the ladies, doubtless, to be very indifferent judges of what a noisy bachelor's party was, sometimes, at the height of the Carnival. He comforted them, however, by assuring them that M. Rataplan was in the habit of

shaking the house to that extent only once in the year. This was very certain, namely, that in no month of the year was it the habit of M. Rataplan to be a quiet lodger. He rudely tried our nerves on many occasions; how then must it have fared with two poor creatures who had one room on his floor —and next to his studio?

Madame Gasparin: who and what was she? The *concierge* knew very little, or nothing, about her; and a middle-aged woman of Spanish extraction, who had a room somewhere in the maze we inhabited, and farmed some of the sets of apartments, and devoted all her spare time to the busy transaction of other people's business; had been baffled at every point, in her attempts to storm the silent citadel in which Madame Gasparin lived. Being unsuccessful in the region of facts, the lady of Spanish extraction, Madame Dolores, spread her wings in the ambient air of fiction. Here she revelled. It should be remarked that, when the secretiveness of a lodger gave impulse to her imagination, her fiction was of a damaging and somewhat acrid description. Madame Gasparin's history was speedily set forth, and cruelly as speedily. She was, of course, *bien peu de chose*. She had very little money. Her husband was a

mystery; but there could be no mistake about the poor girl who lived with her being her daughter. The mother had been a lady's maid in some second-rate family. Her daughter had a certain mysterious air of distinction about her—a look of blood which Madame Dolores would not take upon herself to explain. Nothing, however, could be more plebeian than the mother's face. She looked like the daughter of a *garde champêtre* at most. Madame Dolores shook her swarthy head, saying:—

"We know what the fate of a lady's maid usually is."

And so she settled accounts with Madame Gasparin. I think that Mademoiselle Gasparin disarmed even the tongue of Madame Dolores. The poor girl was, when we entered the house, in the later stage of a rapid consumption. It was startling to meet her on the stairs—a little white ghost of a creature, with a wan smile, and bright, dark, tender eyes. She looked so light and frail, and was so weak, that it appeared as though the softest wind could carry her from the earth. She wore a close snow-white cap tied under her pointed chin. Poor gentle loiterer by an open grave, not even the tongue of Madame Dolores, I am sure, could wag against thee! Did M. Rataplan know that Mademoiselle

Gasparin was lying waiting for her rest in the next room to him, when he woke the echoes of the night in his studio? He must have met her, leaning on her mother's arm, many a time and oft; he must have seen her gliding like one of the "sheeted dead," into the humble room her mother hired in the corner of the lobby; but this system of living in a hive makes the inhabitant of each cell a very selfish animal. Every lodger steels himself against complaints from fellow lodgers, and strives to cheat himself into the belief that he is as independent of them as though he inhabited a Caprera of his own.

He who endeavours to act as an independent human being, while he is merely the occupant of an apartment in a house like ours, drives his head against a stone wall. A little latitude is permitted to him during the Carnival, but he must be good enough to put on his chains on Ash Wednesday! He may be the soul of harmony until midnight, but at that hour he must be as quiet as the Sphynx. His fellow-lodgers will knock at the walls, or against the ceiling, should he touch a musical instrument after midnight. I am sure he would not be permitted, in our house, to murmur his inspiration on the piccolo, in the small hours. He may be a nuisance to his

neighbours, but he must be offensive within the law. Now, there was nothing to be said against M. Rataplan's inveterate habit of rolling his heavy furniture over our heads, after midnight. He was *dans son droit.* But had he, in an evil hour, touched his drum, even in a muffled state, I might have skipped off to the *concierge* and poured a just complaint into his ear. Neither he nor I would be allowed to keep friends in our rooms, dancing until two or three in the morning. Once or twice, at long intervals, I might hold a dancing *soirée,* and trespass beyond midnight; but not oftener. Have I not some friends who are, at this very moment, removing their household gods, because their landlord will not allow them to remain under his roof, unless they will promise him faithfully to turn away their guests at midnight?

I have hinted at a few of the trades that are carried on in our house—but at a few of them only. And I have not yet touched upon the professions we muster. A French writer has recently called Paris, Pianopolis, and has declared that the city is not made of houses, but of pianos. Five stories high our house was, certainly—not a five-storied piano; it was a band and chorus. Every kind of instrument was played within its walls. We were for-

tunate enough to have a *prima donna* on the first floor, who dwelt in a small apartment with any number of her family who happened to be in Paris. When the Signorina Tollolli was not consuming prodigious quantities of maccaroni, she was tripping up and down the scales with a voice that rang through the house. When the *Signorina* was not practising her scales, she was receiving sections of an inexhaustible list of Italian friends and acquaintances. They came in every description of quaint and queer costume. The ante-room was full of brigands' high-pointed head-gear, wideawakes, and chimney-pot hats of strange proportions. The overcoats, the furs, the mufflers, lay about in picturesque confusion; and diffused a strong odour of stale tobacco. Every visitor came with a snatch of song in his throat. Instruments of all descriptions were tuned in the ante-room. Duets, quartetts, quintetts, burst upon the ear, at every hour in the day. One day it was whispered that the first *trombone* of the opera had come to pay his respects to the *Signorina*, in the company of the renowned tenor, who had made such a great sensation in Valparaiso the year before last. It was even surmised, that if the *Signorina's* neighbours hushed themselves into a death-like silence, and listened intently, they might be grati-

fied by catching a few stray notes of the voice that, only four-and-twenty months ago, charmed the natives of Valparaiso. The *Signorina* lived in perpetual expectation of visits from the Bagiers and the Gyes. Her friends appeared to watch the opera-houses for her with the most praiseworthy vigilance. For a considerable time, the siege was planned and laid to the Italian Opera. The *Signorina* commanded in person, and threw out scouts, and watched the weak points of the citadel, with indefatigable industry. All the singers who were actually in the pay of Bagier, were regarded as the enemy; therefore, every misfortune that happened to any one of them, elicited a cheer from the brave soldiers of the *Signorina*. There was great excitement in the *Signorina's* camp one morning, when a spy came in with the intelligence that the new soprano had broken down entirely. Congratulations were offered by every description of bearded Italian; —by a "robust tenor," by the third violin, by the profound bass, and finally, by a most mysterious coffee-coloured gentleman, whose whole duty in life appeared to consist in running messages for the *Signorina's* mother; and whose slender claim to distinction was, that he was the brother-in-law of Madame Bulberini, the mighty *tragédienne* of

Florence. We never knew this mysterious gentleman's name. To us, and to all the house, he was ever known as the brother-in-law of Madame, etc. On the ground of this relationship, he was a presence in the little *salon* of the *Signorina*. It was understood that the great *tragédienne* was building a palace on one of the new Boulevards, and that her brother-in-law had been left in Paris in order to superintend the work. He was especially excited when it appeared probable that the *Signorina* would make a triumphant entry into the opera, over the body of the poor singer who had ignominiously fallen. The *Signorina* had the fine blood of Rome in her veins; and it mantled to her cheek when the trombone made his bow to her, and the third fiddle drew a picture of Bagier humbly lying at her feet. The little coffee-coloured man danced and sang round the Roman lady, who stood in a majestic attitude of triumph, pointing to her slippers, which the humble director of the *Italiens* was to comé presently and kiss. The *Signorina* had quite made up her mind that she would ask heavy terms, if only to punish the director for his past neglect. Had he not been rude enough to call on her before his season began? Had he not applauded her singing, and told her she

should hear of him in a day or two; and had he not gone direct away from her rooms to call on Scagliogla, who was, by innumerable degrees, her inferior?

The breach in the citadel, however, was repaired somehow before the *Signorina* had enforced homage from M. Bagier. When this became known, our floor was once more invaded by the same file of Italians of brigand aspect, who had waited on the *prima donna* with their premature congratulations. They now came to offer their expressions of sympathy, and to afford the *Signorina* consoling instances of great singers who had remained unappreciated for years; but had at last triumphed over the ignorance and malevolence of opera directors, and had reigned as queens, where they had failed as supplicants. The *Signorina*, truth to add, was quite able to furnish, from her own stock of well-assorted vanities, all the balm necessary to the healing of the wound. It was, indeed, a treat to hear her use the undoubted dramatic force she possessed, at the expense of the soprano who had been preferred to her. She mimicked her rival's angular attitudes, and imitated all her vocal imperfections with surprising ease and crispness. Being a Roman *Signorina*, our disappointed neighbour could not take her discomfiture

calmly. She flew from one set of lodgers to a second, telling her tale, and expending upon the narrative so much energetic gesticulation, that we expected every hour to hear she had been carried exhausted to her couch.

"Do you know, Monsieur," she would begin; "that the learned director of the Italian Opera has strengthened his company by the addition of the Signorina Scagliogla? The director has discovered that I am not to be mentioned in the same breath with her."

Then rubbing her hands, as though they had not quite made up their mind whether they would grasp a dagger or a pistol, and setting her face into a smile more horrible than any frown, our *Signorina* continued—

"The director ought to know—he ought to be an authority on who sings false, and who doesn't. Yes, yes; he is perfectly right! All the world knows by this time that *la* Scagliogla is a better singer than I am—is a better actress, is younger, is more likely to please. However, I'm very glad she has got the engagement. Poor girl! I believe they had hardly bread to eat!"

Now, it would have gone very ill with the director of the opera, or with the poor Scagliogla, if either one

or the other, or both, had come within reach of the noble *prima donna* while her disappointment was fresh in her mind. She was somewhat ceremonious with us; but the rank and file of her Italian acquaintances had a slight taste of her ladyship's quality. Tito, Gigi, and the rest, got short sharp answers, and were speedily sent about their business. The *Signorina* took some time to cool, and I don't think she would have been quite herself again so soon as she actually was, had there not been, amid the troops of neglected musical geniuses who frequented her *salon*, a sentimental student of the *Conservatoire*—a Frenchman. This sentimental young Parisian paid amorous attentions to the *Signorina*, with a light and easy manner that sat gracefully enough upon him. The lady's Roman blood was quickly inflamed; she listened and believed. Now the Frenchman was making love, rather to show what a *spirituel* fellow he was, and how he could turn his sentences, than with any serious matrimonial intentions. The young Frenchman's compliments were deftly turned and administered at the right moment, and the lady's greedy ear received them, and her heart treasured them. The *Signorina* was in downright earnest from the first, and told her female friends that she loved as they loved at Rome. She was all fire, and animated with

a faith and simplicity that were almost childlike. He was amusing his leisure, airing his powers of pleasing, and warming his vanity pleasantly by the ardour he had inspired in a handsome and accomplished woman.

The *Signorina* so openly expressed her gratification at the lightest attention she received, and wore her heart, with a grace so infantile, on her sleeve, that her lover very soon took alarm, and expressed his surprise that the young lady should be so very fond of him. The fact was, he was surprised to find all those empty phrases of his had fallen by accident on an ear that had not been tuned in Paris. His phrases had been believed by a simple Italian child of song; and there he was, to his undisguised astonishment, lord and master of a heart which he was hardly prepared to possess.

The *Signorina* was, as the reader has seen, sharp enough when her interests as a singer were in question, but she was a very child nevertheless: a dangerous child to trifle with, *Monsieur le Français*, with that Roman blood of hers coursing in her veins!

It may occur to the reader to ask himself how we obtained all these details of the lives, and

sentiments, and ambitions of the inmates of the House we Lived In. It argues in the reader who has put himself this question, a complete ignorance of the terms on which the many inmates of a large Paris house are wont to live. The floors drift into an acquaintance with each other. Children on the third floor fall ill, and a mother on the first floor asks tenderly after them. Neighbours meet day after day on the common staircase, or at the *concierge's* door. In short, the notices of marriages that are posted against the walls of the twenty arrondissement *Mairies*, are convincing evidence of the facility with which French people living in the same house, become acquainted with one another. I am inclined to hold that at least twenty per cent. of the marriages that take place in Paris, are between people who have come together accidentally by happening to take rooms in the same house. In every list of names and addresses of people about to be married, we find a "*Monsieur un tel*," of blank number, blank street, to "*Mademoiselle une telle, même maison.*" It is impossible to remember how any of our neighbours became acquainted with each other, and I expect that the only person in the house who had the histories of these intimacies

at her finger's end, was Madame Dolores, whose gaze nothing could escape, and whose tongue discussed everything on which her vigilant eye had rested.

It came to our knowledge that a widow lady and her daughter, who lived together, were in comfortable circumstances, and had been better off in former days; but that they had never moved in other than commercial society. We knew that they were in the habit of taking bran baths, and that they got them cheap at their bathing establishment by taking an *abonnement*, and providing their own towels. They had not many friends left in their retirement, we knew also, because only two little bags of sweetmeats were left for them on New Year's Day. They appeared to be, in short, almost as lonely as the photographer on the *entresol*.

"That man has a history in which much mystery is included," said the *Signorina*, as she stood with folded arms, peering from her little *salon* window, through the glass roof of the photographer's operating room. From her post of observation she could survey, at her ease, the artist labouring at his profession. Poor fellow! He had little enough to do: his sitters were few and far between. In

vain he rubbed his camera, and disposed the draperies for backgrounds. In vain he polished and re-polished the little squares of glass on which he fondly hoped to cast perfect negatives. Few and far between were the sitters still. The artist wandered up and down his desolate studio, quiet and resigned, waiting for the better days. From time to time, a lady, dingily but neatly attired, appeared, and went nimbly searching about for things that must be put in order. In this search she would occasionally include the artist's slouched hat, and his cravat that was always awry; and inasmuch as she often included a kiss in these delicate attentions, we concluded that the lady was his wife. Now and then, on *fête* days, the frames of specimens which were hung at the door of our house, would attract a few holiday people to enter the studio, tempted by the modesty of the artist's pecuniary demand. It was rather painful amusement to watch the busy business-like air the photographer and his wife would at once assume. It was their obvious wish to convey to their sitters an idea that they were overwhelmed with customers. The adoption of this not very sinful deceit was simply an acknowledgment of the world's worship of success. Had they told their

sitters that the *atelier* was nearly always empty, and that they had been sitting many days waiting for a customer, even the few holiday folk who had wandered to them would have shunned them.

The *Signorina* was quite right. There *was* a mystery about the photographer—a mystery, indeed, that might have rewarded the attention of the younger Dumas. The photographer was a baron in disguise, neither more nor less—an ogre of a baron who had eaten all his money. That lady in the dingy attire was, then, the baroness! The *entresol* believed that the baron had wasted his substance at Baden-Baden and at Homburgh, with a camellia lady. The first floor pooh-poohed this explanation of the noble photographer's downfall. He had gambled on the Bourse; and on that memorable day when, contrary to the anticipation of every stock-jobber, the news of peace, after the Crimean war, sent down the funds; he had lost every *franc*, every *liard* he had in the world. The second floor could never be brought to believe that the baron ever had two five-franc pieces to rattle against each other. The *Signorina* held the question to be so important, that she took an early opportunity of having a serious conversation with

Madame Dolores on the subject. Madame at once owned that she knew much more than she was permitted to divulge. There could be no doubt about it; she had it from the very best authority. M. Ambroise was a baron. She had seen some of his old cards. He still received letters from time to time from a few of his old friends, who sympathized with him in his misfortune; and among these were two marquises and a duke, whose names she could mention if she chose. Madame Dolores' method of replying to the questions of the *Signorina* were highly tantalizing to this lady. In vain did the *prima donna* assure Madame Dolores that the baron's secret would be safe in her keeping. Madame was too old a hand in a Paris house to be snared in this way. The baron's secret should die with her, said she; and should she, in very truth, carry it to her grave, I make bold to predict it will be the only one that she will take with her.

In a house like ours, marriages, births, and deaths jostle one another so frequently,—the pastrycook carrying the wedding-breakfast so narrowly escapes upsetting the bearer of funeral baked meats, on the staircase,—that every lodger becomes a selfish kind of philosopher, and is not extremely disturbed by hearing the rattle in the throat of his next-door

neighbour. On a certain winter's night, a notable group of feminine gossips had trickled from various *appartements* on the first floor, into the little *salon* of the *Signorina*. It was a very wintry night, indeed, when the wind had a razor edge, and the snow drifted in huge leaden volumes of cloud overhead. The ladies were sitting closely round the crackling logs, talking of the parties they had been at, and the parties to which they were invited; seasoning their discourse, it is almost superfluous to add, with a plentiful supply of scandal. The *sirops* of Madame G—— had been condemned as execrable, and it had been unanimously admitted that it was a great pity Madame F—— permitted her daughter to sing before company; when the *Signorina's* mother cut in with this careless remark,—

"By the way, how is poor Mademoiselle Gasparini this afternoon?"

"How is she, dear mother," the *Signorina* answered, with a little surprise in her tone; "why, she has been dead three-quarters of an hour."

The young lady leant towards the mantelpiece, to be quite sure of the hour, in the winter twilight.

"Yes," she added; "just three-quarters of an

hour. She died at four o'clock, and it now wants exactly a quarter to five. Hearing the hour, one of the ladies jumped up from her seat, and saying, "Dear me, I ordered dinner at half-past four," sailed, with many courtesies, from the *salon*.

CHAPTER II.

OUR CONCIERGE.

"CORDON, S'IL VOUS PLAÎT!" Be polite to the *concierge* under all circumstances. You are in his hands. He keeps watch over you. He receives all your letters, sees all your friends, your tradesmen, and your creditors. He marks the hours at which you come and go. He knows when you have a new coat, and what you do with the old one. Observe, that he has nothing to do in the world (if he be in a good house) except to make notes from that little window, whence he surveys the world that passes to and fro. It is he who answers all questions that may be addressed to him by your friends, or enemies, concerning you. You are only the first-floor lodger, but he is *concierge;* and he will have you mark the difference in your relative positions. You may fret, but you cannot escape him. When he pulls the cord, you must accept the act as a favour which he has been gracious enough to pay you. There is not a man with whom you are acquainted whose name is not familiar to him.

All your little ailments are at his fingers' ends. If he had a good memory, a fair notion of style and orthography, he might write romances that would pale the star of the author of "La Femme de Trente Ans." His malicious eye marks who comes when Monsieur is out. He knows when to put a pecuniary expression into his slavish countenance. Monsieur de Vandenesse is understood by the *concierge*, when the Marquis is all confidence. The Marquise d'Aiglemont could not have defied the vengeance of the man in the little dark room, by the gateway of her hotel. Irreproachable himself, he sits in his sombre little cabin—as judge in a court of justice. He knows that those scandalous romancists of the Boulevards write severe things about him. They call him *mouchard;* but he smiles, and counts his hundred-sous pieces; and as he drops them in the leather bag, he grins—thinking of the time when some of these gentlemen will be lying in the hospital—ay, possibly lapping the soup of Bicêtre; and he will be *rentier*, and will follow his daughter in her wedding dress to the Bois de Boulogne, having given her a pretty *dot*. He has bought *Rentes* already—trust him. His five-franc pieces were at the disposition of his country during the Crimean war; and the people laughed to see him counting them out. The *placement*

was highly advantageous, it is true; but, he trusted, people would give him a little credit for patriotism.

His prying habits apart, the *concierge* is what we call a respectable man. He is always at his post. He is bountifully civil. He is ever faithful to his trust. You will not often see a *concierge* before the Correctional Police. The extent of his dissipation is an occasional *coup* at the nearest wine-shop, with a neighbour. On fine evenings he sits under the gateway, with his wife and her friend, lazily watching the passers-by. In the winter he is shut, with his wife and the friend (a neighbouring cook or house-maid), in his steamy den. It is gloomily lighted by an oil lamp, with a green shade over it. On a shelf, by the table, lie the letters of the lodgers. Against the wall are rows of keys, which open the various apartments of the house. The den is packed with every kind of bundle, domestic utensil, and package; and overhead is a bed, that is let down on the floor at night. The wife and her friend knit and talk scandal; and the *concierge*, with the cordon at hand, reads the evening paper, and gives forth the news—when he is in an amiable mood. He is a philosopher, whom nothing moves. He has seen every phase of life. Weddings and funerals by the

hundred; domestic quarrels, executions, ruin, extraordinary strokes of luck, love, jealousy, despair—all pass by that little square window of his. How often has he helped to hang the black cloth across the gateway; and to arrange the tapers round the coffin in the passage, within view of the people in the street, that these might enter and sprinkle holy water on the dead! I remember one frosty December morning (some ten years have flown since then) I was the proud inhabitant of rooms on the first floor of a student's hotel, in the Rue des Quatre Vents. Those four winds blew no good to anybody. Fate had hit a knock-down blow at every inhabitant of that street. It was the street of the great Paris family of the Empty Pockets. The morning was icy, and a keen wind blew through the long dusty passage that led to the street. I had a word to say to the *concierges*—man and wife. They had made mistakes with my letters, and had given some of my newspapers to the second floor. As I passed hurriedly to the stifling little place where the *concierge* and his wife were rubbing their lean knees over a stifling little stove, I almost fell over a long box (very like an orange box), that was propped on end, as a ladder, or a plank of timber, against the wall.

I made my complaint, and was met with that crushing and unanswerable humility for which my Quatre-Vents *concierges* were remarkable. Poverty is, to most people, a break in the encampment that lets in a pack of wolves upon them. To my humble *concierges* it was impenetrable armour.

"We are so poor, you see, sir," said they, whenever I opened a complaint. "We are very sorry; but we are poor people." Impossible to be angry with people who clasped your knees. On that December morning I had determined to be firm.

"This is unendurable! Once more, my papers!"

"You must really excuse anything this morning, sir; especially with poor people, who do their best."

"And why this morning?" I answered. "To begin with, I nearly broke my shins over a great deal box you have planted halfway across the passage."

"That, sir—why it's Mademoiselle Lucille!"

I had stumbled against a coffin, containing the remains of a lodger whom I had seen day after day drawing water at the fountain opposite my window; at the moment when preparations were making for an humble lying-in-state under the gateway.

I was silenced; and suffered henceforth the blunders of the poor *conciergerie* without complaint.

I have no doubt now, having at any rate the years that bring the philosophical mind, those artful Quatre-Vents *concierges* are *rentiers;* and will help his Imperial Majesty to realise those millions which "the prosperity of the Empire" compels him to borrow.

The privileges of the *concierge* are bearable. Let him take the biggest log when you are supplied with half a load of wood. You pay him the expected gratification when you return home after midnight. You cannot help the fast friendship that springs up between him and your cook. He must know when the price of peaches is low enough for your pocket; and that you quarrelled with the cobbler over his charge for mending your shoes. Every detail of your contract with the *traiteur* is his property. You drink Bordeaux at twenty-five sous the *litre,* and he knows it; and it is only when you have friends, you go even as far as Beaune. The fowls are too dear in the market to-day for Madame; the cook has told him so with a toss of the head; and he holds that you are *bien peu de chose.* A friend out at elbows has paid you a visit; and went out arm-in-arm with you, and *tu-toied* you. The landlord has called three times for his rent. It is the privilege of the *concierge* to be posted up in the doings of the back

staircase, and of the front staircase, of your establishment. You furnish Sunday afternoon conversation to him and his friends.

The oyster-woman, who sits with her fish securely packed in straw, waiting for customers at the corner of the street; elbow to elbow with the vendor of roasted chestnuts—this buxom old lady, who has the firmest thumb I ever saw engaged opening an oyster, has been in this street of the fashionable west of Paris (to which I have promoted myself from the Quatre-Vents) these five-and-twenty years. Rubbing her back against the corner-stone of the Rue de Grevuhle, this observant creature heard the murderous thunders of the days of July; caught the droning of "Mourir pour la Patrie," in 1848; and surveyed the effervescence of the *coup-d'état*—opening oysters with that thumb of majestic force, the while! She is here still, busy, talkative, and as receptive as ever. She is the chosen confidante of all the cooks and *concierges* in the street. Under that snow-white cap of hers lie, snugly and tightly packed, the archives of every kitchen in the faubourg. Every hint, every rumour, falls into her net. Her lively eyes are upon every man, woman, and child in the street.

Cook, to Madame. "Madame Buisson is en-

chanted with your new dress, Madame. She saw you in it yesterday for the first time."

Madame. "I'm delighted to hear that I have pleased Madame Buisson, Clemence; but, pray, who is Madame Buisson?"

Clemence makes a theatrical start, and will not believe that Madame can be ignorant of the name of Madame Buisson. "Why, Madame," cries Clemence, "she has been in the street twenty-five years."

Madame. "Possibly; but what is she?"

Clemence. "Why, Madame, the oyster-woman at the corner of the Rue de Grevuhle."

No *concierge* would deprive himself of the pleasure and profit of Madame Buisson's acquaintance. Nor would the lady think for one moment of shortening her supply of scandal, by offending a man who held the key of a house.

My west end *concierge* was one of Madame Buisson's intimates. I lived in a very short street, and from my balcony I could distinctly see all that was passing in it. When I threw the windows open in the early morning, the *concierge* was cooling his feverish nose on the doorstep; or talking with the man who was taking down the shutters of his favourite wine-shop, where he had just sipped his "morn-

ing's refresher." He would sit on the form by the wine-shop door, and cast his bleared eyes over the great house opposite, that was his domain.

I felt that his eye rested occasionally upon me, and that I must be on my best behaviour. He was an excellent sample of the *concierge*, dressed in a very short, square cut, dress coat, of a mouldy greenish hue; a waistcoat brightened with metal buttons; blue trousers, and, in the early morning, sabots. A snuff-brown baggy cap covered his wise head, with the peak of it put sideways, that it might not impede his observations. There were not many variations in his morning performance. He had a greeting with the wood and coke merchant, who was stacking logs in his black shed. The baker halted with the loaves towering far above his head, to exchange news. The patient *auvergnat*, ambling along with his cans of water slung across his shoulder, answered his morning pleasantry; for, by the laughter, my *concierge* could say good things,—at least he laughed at them very much himself, and appeared to be rewarded from time to time with a *coup*, offered to him by some grateful friend of the street. It was worth an hour spent on my balcony to see the Rabelaisian content and chuckle with which, when invited to the pewter bar, he followed his entertainer; and the *bon-*

homie with which he slapped his momentary host on the back as they came forth, after a few minutes, and he resumed his seat on the form. We used to call him the Spider. He caught many flies in the course of the morning, when he was not called from his post by the piercing voice of his better-half, summoning him across the road, to perform some duty of his responsible office. When he was so summoned, he would put on a grave, magisterial air, directly draw the cuff of his coat across his Bacchanal lips, set the peak of his cap in a becoming position, and, summoning to his aid every scrap of dignity at his command, make across the road to see who was at the gates of his kingdom.

In his way, the *concierge* was a *bon vivant;* but never did he permit his love of the good things of this world to interfere with the scrupulous performance of his official duties. He was as severe as a colonel called to the front of his regiment. His friends might joke him when he was off duty; but he was true as steel when he stood at the door of the lodge, and was examining anybody who wished to pass upstairs. If anybody who knew my rooms, and had visited them twenty times, ventured to pass his lodge and to pull my bell, without having undergone a preliminary inspection,

the *concierge* would follow him up the stairs, and summon him to explain himself. Very amiable visitors laughed only; but the quick-tempered were not complimentary in their answers. An Italian visitor said to me one evening, "Do you know, that if I had not entertained the very highest respect for you, I should have boxed the ears of your *concierge!*" I am sure that if he had completely indulged his inclination, I should not have been mortally offended. I heard afterwards that my cook and the *concierge* had put the Italian gentleman in his proper place. They had agreed that he was not worth much. Said the cook, "I opened the door to him, and he asked whether Monsieur was at home, without saying 'Good day' to me."

I was walking past the porter's lodge one afternoon, in great haste, when the *concierge* dashed out and called after me. He was in an excited state, and when excited he was in the habit of twitching his features into the most painful contortions; whereupon the following dialogue invariably passed between him and his wife—a portly lady, who might have carried him about in her reticule:—

"Don't make grimaces," the lady observed, with authority.

Her lord looked at her with scorn, tempered by the number of *coups* he had taken in the course of the morning. He would resume his conversation, completely turning his back upon his wife. She would fold her arms, and gradually shift her position to one where she could catch the expressions of her husband's face. Again, in a more authoritative tone—

"Don't make grimaces, I tell you, Monsieur."

Monsieur, without looking for an instant at his wife, would answer, "Is that any business of yours, Madame?" And as he replied, he would back towards her, and so force her into the lodge, continuing his conversation the while.

This scene was punctually enacted, when I was stopped on my way out to listen to a complaint.

The *concierge* removed his brown cap, smiled submissively—the rascal! and, in his sweetest voice, said—

"Monsieur will pardon me, but I have a little observation to make to him."

"Speak," said I, impatiently.

"It was past twelve o'clock when Monsieur's guest left last night. I am a light sleeper——"

"Well!" I interrupted sharply, having added ill-temper to my impatience.

"I only wish to make a little observation to Monsieur. If his guests would go a little earlier—that's all. The bell rings close to my ears when I am in bed. The nights are beginning to be cold."

"Do I understand," I answered icily, "that you wish me to get up in my *salon* and say, 'Ladies and gentlemen, it is past eleven o'clock, and my *concierge* begs that you will go, for he is a light sleeper?'"

"Hold your tongue!" Madame exclaimed, escaping once more from the lodge. But her husband, without noticing, backed once more towards her, and drove her out of sight.

"Monsieur," he said, "will excuse my little observation."

The *concierge* took his revenge. I received daily complaints. The second-floor had been disturbed by our piano, the boys had stamped up the stairs, the maid had laughed in the face of the *concierge's* wife. Madame Buisson, the oyster-woman or *écaillère* (of the powerful thumbs) recruited on the side of the *concierge*. It went up and down the street, that our laundress had called four times in one day for her bill. I must do the *belle écaillère* the justice of at once allowing that she showed

herself a mistress of scandal, in her conduct of this damaging fact. There could not be the least doubt about it—four times had the laundress called for her bill in one day. Hadn't we twenty francs among us? of what were we made? this poor woman wanted her money! We should take a cheaper lodging. The *concierge* called the *écaillère* to witness that he never had a high opinion of us. So much was established to our detriment. Clemence, the cook, affected despair, and vowed vengeance against the bad tongues that had maligned us, but the case as it stood damaged us only. This mild mischief did not satisfy the *écaillère*—she must have it artistically complete. When she condescended to wield a sword, she would have the world know it was a two-edged one. So she turned upon the laundress. The laundress was in a hurry for her money, because her lover had broken off all relations with her that morning; and she was determined to solace herself abundantly at the wine-shop. With this finishing touch given to the story, it pleased all the street. I believe our servant, in the innocence of her heart, explained that the laundress called twice before the family was stirring; once when breakfast was in progress; and once when everybody was out; and that she

had her money in the afternoon. But the explanation threw the *écaillère* into fits of laughter; she shook her head, and would not have her ingenious scandal destroyed.

If I fared badly, the *entresol* and the second-floor fared worse. Stung to the quick one morning with the hourly spying of the *concierge*, the *entresol* rushed out, took other rooms, and was in his new quarters before nightfall; while the second-floor—they were Poles, and, I grant, mysterious ones to boot—were, according to the *concierge*, "turned out" by him, because Monsieur returned home late at night. It will be easily imagined that the Poles did not escape the talk of the street. The *concierge* told the *écaillère*, who told the woman at the boot-stall in the Madeleine Market, who told our cook, that the Polish lady in the second-floor sat in her room, crying, all day long. The street knew that the Pole bought an umbrella; that he gave twenty francs for it, and that before it had been in the possession of his family twenty-four hours, his wife left it in an omnibus. I think the *concierge* must have celebrated the Pole's misfortune with an extra *coup*.

We followed the example of the *entresol*. If that *concierge* was not a *mouchard*, he had missed

his vocation. His nose was in every bag of roasted chestnuts that entered the house. In vain I cried, "*Cordon, s'il vous plait,*" in a winning voice, as though I were calling a bird to its sugar: I must be surveyed before I could pass into the street. When I returned home and pulled the bell, a brown wrinkled face, with no more shape nor complexion than a dried Normandy pippin, crowned with a cotton night-cap, was thrust out of a little window by the door, and I underwent another searching examination before the string was pulled. I have had experiences of many *concierges;* but my model of the toping, gossiping, quarrelsome, pretentious, and disconcerted *concierge,* who combines under that snuff-brown cap of his all the vices of his class, is he who, I have since been told, has a *tendresse* for the *écaillère!*

My new *concierge,*—I watched him narrowly before I committed myself to a bargain for the rooms,—was a homely working man; quiet, and always occupied with *his own* business. In the morning he envelopes himself in a blue apron, that reaches from his chin to his toes; blacks boots, runs errands, delivers letters, and is, in short, ready for any duty, and to put a bright face on it. I have met a few like him;—one or two in students' hotels

near the Pantheon; one in the Rue d'Angoulême St. Honoré (where, people conceive that they are bound to give themselves airs), and two or three in bourgeois' houses of unpretending aspect. But the *concierge* is a spy and a nuisance, whether amiable or angry, frank or prying; and he is full of scandal. He is the *bête noir* of the Parisians. They riddle him with small shot; he provides thousands of pleasantries for the journals; there is a sneer all over the house when he raps at the doors of the various apartments on the morning of a new year's day, and, with his good wishes, leaves his present of a few oranges. This is his way of announcing that he expects a solid pecuniary new year's gift; and his gifts are many, for Fear gives them. It has long been agreed on all hands, that it is prudent to be on excellent terms with the man who guards the gate of your house, who receives your letters, and who knows many of your secrets. He is laughed at, but he remains strong. His tyranny is felt every hour in the day, but Paris must be rebuilt before it can be shaken off. He can be punished if he betrays his trust; a lodger can compel the landlord to dismiss him, if he misbehaves himself; but while he is merely a reckless gossip, a malicious

brewer of mischief, or an eccentric who is crushed by an overweening estimate of the importance of his duties, he must be tolerated, and not only be tolerated, he must be petted.

A Parisian's house is not his castle—it is that of his *concierge!*

CHAPTER III.

OUR COOK, CLEMENCE.

It was impossible to find fault with Clemence. She was at once so humble, amiable, and ingenious. She wheedled the sword out of the enemy's grasp. She licked the hand just raised to pay her wages. Her sympathies were acute. She held in the utmost horror all the tricks of Paris tradesmen, and she had a profound contempt for the race of Paris cooks. She was a bright exception. Her life had been passed in the service of great families; so that she could not have the smallest idea of anything that was not correct. Her adventures, as she described them, were not without interest, as audacious essays on the credulity of foreigners. The *aplomb* of Clemence was superb. She had a fine faculty for flattery. This soothing salve was spread over everybody. She had experience enough to last three lifetimes, and to crowd each; yet had it never been her good fortune to come across a family half so agreeable, or one-tenth part so distinguished, as ours. Our *bébé*

was the most intelligent child she had ever approached; and she positively and repeatedly asserted her determination never to believe that he was only four years old. There must be some mistake. Clemence clasped her hands, stared at Monsieur Bébé, and exclaimed: "Four years! there must be some error!" Then our parrot was the pearl of parrots, and although Clemence had a white rag round her forefinger many days on his account, Monsieur Coco was pronounced "as sweet as an angel." Everybody was handsome, amiable, and clever, and singularly unlike every other English family. This was held to be a very great compliment indeed.

Having, on her arrival, powdered us with compliments, Mademoiselle Clemence, our cook, considered that the time had come for setting forth her own perfections, and impressing upon all of us, down to that wonderful Monsieur Bébé, the tremendous stroke of luck we had made in obtaining her services. We were requested to consider, just for a moment, that, had we come only two days later, Clemence would have been snapped up by another family. We had escaped perdition by just two days. However, we might now enjoy the singular good fortune that had befallen us; and thank Heaven we

had secured Mademoiselle Clemence to be our cook. By this one piece of good fortune we had freed ourselves from a world of trouble; we had a cook who knew everything and everybody. We should have everything cheap; why, the woman who brought the butter to the market twice in every week, had known her for twenty years. The butter-woman's husband worked in the commune where Mademoiselle Clemence's brother was *garde champêtre;* a fact from which this lady endeavoured to convince us by rapid argument, which was conclusive to her mind, that we should have excellent butter and eggs for a mere nothing. And this accidental reference to her brother the *garde champêtre* naturally reminded Clemence of her own personal influence; which, she would have us know, was great with the highest personage in the Empire. She had talked with the Emperor—and had found him very agreeable. We humble folk expressed our astonishment, and, stimulated by the round eyes of Monsieur Bébé (who was again turned over, like a bundle, and pronounced ten years old at the very least), Mademoiselle Clemence, cook, continued:

"Yes: I lived in a very great family, where one of the Emperor's favourite generals visited. I told him my father had served the great Emperor, and

that he had no pension. The general said he would speak to the present Emperor. So, one day he came, told me to dress in my best, and then I was taken to the Tuileries. The Emperor was charming. He begged me to sit down; and when he had talked to me a little time, and promised me a pension for my father, he begged me to go and see him again."

The satisfaction manifested at this account of our cook's interview with the chief of the State, brought out the dominant peculiarity of Mademoiselle Clemence. She had a fine collection of stories, all of which tended to her advantage. She had been the object of marked attention on the part of many of the great personages of her time; indeed, she had never lived with a family that was not remarkable in some way, and from which she had not received a studied and extraordinary compliment. She had lived with an English family who had been melted to tears when they were compelled to part with her. The name of the late Duke of Orleans was mentioned in her presence. This accident called an anecdote to her mind.

"I have spoken to the duke," she said. "I was in the service of a peer of France at the time. One day a gentleman called. He was struck with

my height." Clemence was at least six feet high, and was proud of her inches. "'You are very tall,' the gentleman said; 'are you a Parisian?' I answered that I was not, but didn't tell him where I came from. When the gentleman had gone, my master came to me, and asked me whether I knew I had been talking to the eldest son of the king. I happened to put my hand in my apron pocket a few minutes afterwards, and felt that there was a piece of money in it. The duke had contrived to slip a louis there unawares."

Poor Mademoiselle Clemence believed, in her innocence, that she was dazzling a few benighted English folk. She was making herself an authority, a heroine. She had travelled also. She had been to England with a rich British family. "I have adventures always," she exclaimed gaily, "wherever I go. I have talked to the Queen of England." Perhaps a slight movement of incredulity on our part stimulated her inventive faculties, for she hastened to explain her assertion. "My master in England was a high court official. One day he and his wife were at St. James's Palace, when the Queen said, 'I have never seen a tall Frenchwoman.' My mistress replied that she had a French cook who was exceedingly tall. 'Indeed,' said the Queen,

'I should very much like to see her.' My mistress accordingly took me to the Palace, and I was introduced to the Queen. Her Majesty said that she was very glad to see me; asked me questions about my *pays;* and, when I was leaving, told me that whenever I came to England again, I was to be sure and let her know, and not to fail to call upon her. But that is not all. A few days afterwards a large parcel arrived from the Palace. I naturally thought it was for my mistress; but, on examining the direction, I saw it was for 'Mademoiselle Clemence, Cook.' I opened it, and found a handsome present from the Queen, with a very kind letter."

Mademoiselle Clemence repeated again and again that the Queen of England was very *gracieuse;* and that, most certainly, if she visited London again, she should call. Mademoiselle was a very tall and horribly gaunt woman, whose sacrifices to the graces were as rare as they were superficial. She was an ill-preserved five-and-forty. Yet was she a great stickler for respect; and a formidable critic when the appearance of others was under discussion. Her airs of authority on all subjects, and the care she took to impress upon the people she served that she could not brook a word of censure, since

she was never in the wrong—prevailed with the timid. She continued to convey to them a feeling that it would be the height of arrogance on their part to dismiss her for incompetency; she, who was so devoted to her employers; she, who took the part of the family against the *concierge;* she, who knew everybody in the neighbourhood—and had been cook to dozens of English and other families in these very apartments. No: cooks as a body might be dismissable, but she was not.

Having taken her family by storm, Mademoiselle Clemence ruled with a rod of iron. She appeared, smiling and confident, every morning, to take our orders. With a refinement of cruelty, she called her own amendments to any suggestions, "Madame's commands." She went to market: bought what she pleased, at her own price. She alone held relations with the butcher. Every dish that was suggested to her was within her competence. No sauce came amiss to her. When a little *entrée* that required the nicest handling, and which the *gourmet* would not order at any restaurant, was hinted at, she laughed at it. It was a trifle to her. It was the easiest thing in the world. Any cook could manage a *suprême.* "We should have it"—but we never saw it. It had struck Made-

moiselle Clemence, just an hour before dinner, that we should like a nice wholesome dish of stewed veal for the children, much better. To begin with, Monsieur Bébé was so fond of it; and he had such coaxing, winning ways, it was a real delight to please him. Clemence had taken the entire family into her heart of hearts. She had a lively regard for our health, and had always considered (although, of course, it was for Madame to decide) that a plain diet was the most wholesome. A good soup; a nice *gigot*, or some cutlets, say with tomato sauce; and some good fruit,—what could be better for health? Old men wanted spiced dishes, and couldn't eat a sole unless it was *au gratin* or *à la Normande*. Poor fellows, their digestion was so impaired, their appetite was so enfeebled, a plain fried sole was not enough to tempt them; they must have strong wine also, to warm their poor stomachs, before they could eat at all. But young people liked simple dishes, because their digestion was good; and the people who were the simplest eaters had the longest lives. The Berrings, whom Clemence had accompanied to London, who were immensely rich people, were as remarkable for the simplicity of their table as they were for their extraordinary wealth. They always had plain

fish, plain meat, and good fruit. When they had company, they went, of course, to Chevet; and the place was inundated with cooks and *patissiers*. They received only ambassadors and court people. They had been known to pay two francs each for peaches. What could a few hundred francs, more or less, be to them? Even on these occasions Mr. and Madame Berrings hardly touched anything. They dined with the children beforehand! And such children. What a colour they had! They often reminded Clemence of ours, except that they hadn't one who could be compared for a single instant with Monsieur Bébé. To be sure, it was not every day such a child could be seen.

Clemence could cook a fowl over her little charcoal fire. She could arrange a *pot-au-feu*, she could stew veal with mushrooms, and she could accomplish a rough idea of beef *à la mode*—beef *à la mode* being, I may observe, as unlike that strange mixture of meat and vegetables for which so many British taverns are "celebrated," as Crécy is unlike Bisque. Clemence, however, could not make a fair Julienne soup. I suggested that her opaque fluid, charged with potatoes, was not my idea of the soup called Julienne. Clemence smiled. She was too powerful to rebuke me. It would be a strange

thing—indeed, it would be unaccountable—if she didn't know how to make Julienne soup. The Berrings were so delighted with it, that she had the very greatest difficulty in persuading them to have any other soup. The general who introduced her to the Emperor, said he enjoyed it more than any dish he had touched since his return from the Crimea; and he had dined at the Tuileries day after day.

In an evil moment the family which Clemence deigned to serve, while waiting for another opportunity of calling on the Queen of England, and of speaking to the Emperor on the advisability of making her father a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, discovered a liking for tomatos. From that moment they almost lived on them. They appeared at table with every dish. Clemence enlarged upon their merits; only people of good taste cared for them; they were excellent for the health: she knew *we* should like them. The Berrings were never tired of eating them. It did her heart good to see Mr. Berrings eat them:—he was so *distingué*. He was a perfect English gentleman. The French laughed at his red hair: but she always maintained that it gave him a noble appearance.

Mademoiselle Clemence had one aversion, and

one only; and that aversion was the *concierge*. She always avoided him when she could. He told her that Monsieur came home at past one o'clock last night. She answered that it was no business of his when Monsieur chose to come home. It was his duty to pull the string and hold his tongue. He was known throughout the neighbourhood, and was quite capable of saying all kinds of things about us. We might, however, be quite easy, for she would let the neighbourhood know how he had behaved. He had a wicked tongue, and nobody knew it better than his wife—poor woman!

Mademoiselle Clemence, in short, was a very clever talker; but a very bad cook. Matters came to a crisis over an omelette. It was a bad omelette —the worst ever put between mortal teeth. We were stern; and Clemence had the sagacity to see that her reign was at an end. She had worn out the Berrings; she felt that she could not persuade us that the General who had introduced her to the Emperor, preferred broken, greasy, and shapeless omelettes. She had speculated with all her stories, and had failed. But she had the neighbourhood still to her back. She had a standing of twenty years in her *quartier!* When, at last, it was made known that we were going to leave the

neighbourhood, Mademoiselle Clemence was equal to the occasion. She contained herself. She still brought an apple or a cake to that wonder of wonders, Monsieur Bébé. He was still an angel and a jewel. Mademoiselle Clemence was affable enough to talk about the generosity of the English, and of the roomful of valuables former families whom she had served, had left her. Monsieur's luncheon was still to her an object of paramount importance. Her only anxiety was to know that we were not going to engage another cook in our new quarters.

Mademoiselle Clemence held out bravely to the last moment; her gratitude (she had been preposterously overpaid) being a lively sense of favours to come.

It chanced that some valuables were left behind in the old lodgings. Some unfortunate creatures were sent to fetch them. Mademoiselle Clemence was seated in the box of the *concierge*, in close conversation with him. In company with the *concierge*, she burst forth. The torrent of her abuse was copious, for she was not satisfied with the gratification she had received—in addition to her wages.

Mademoiselle Clemence is now telling her stories

of her introduction to two crowned heads, to another English family—in the very rooms of the late English family, which she execrates. If they be fond of amusing inventions and bad dinners, she will satisfy them. Clemence is a representative woman. There are many copies of her in the English quarter of Paris. She knows all the tradespeople of her quarter well, and she leads her families to their shops. I don't quarrel with her; because she has her *remise* on every spoonful of jam the children eat; but because she and her class flourish by talking many of my countrymen and countrywomen into the belief that they are—French cooks!

CHAPTER IV.

OUR MELANCHOLY BAKER.

I WAS leaving my rooms in the Rue de Castellane early one morning, when I was met at my door by the baker, who had just stood two loaves, each about the length of a musket, against the wall. I was struck with the man's mournful and sick appearance. He was as thin as a living human being well could be. There was a most touching expression of pain and weariness in his sunken eyes; and he went heavily—very heavily for so spare a man—down the stairs. I heard that he had a little sharp cough. His miserable figure interested me, and led me to consider and to inquire into the condition of the working bakers of Paris. Often on my way home at night I had been startled by the most painful screams and groans, that appeared to travel to my ears from the earth under my feet; and on looking through a little trap under a baker's shop-window, I had found that the discordant noise proceeded from

two or three half nude men, who were kneading vast troughs of dough in a steamy cellar. I have watched these poor labourers, doomed to toil through winter and through summer nights, and to sleep through the sunlight, with profound pity. Not only are they exposed to all kinds of unhealthy influences, baked for hours in a cellar, and thrust out on chilly mornings to go home to their garrets; but they are doomed to live apart from all other classes of working men. Any reader who may have been accustomed, while in Paris, to take early walks, may have seen the well-known figure of the journeyman baker ambling sadly home after his night's work, in his grey cotton clothes, and with the new-baked loaf, which is his daily perquisite, under his arm. He has just left the hot mouth of the oven, and the cold morning breeze strikes to the marrow of his bones. He is hurrying, sore oppressed, to his bed, through crowds of labourers, who, fresh after a good night's sleep, are commencing their day's work.

I am at a loss to discover why French dramatic writers have been in the habit of selecting the baker as their type of the jolly buffoon; for I am certain that a more mournful figure than that of him who passes his weary nights making the daily

bread of the Parisians, does not exist within the fortifications. His trade forces him to be unsociable, for he is asleep when the rest of the world is awake. He can just say "Good morning" and "Good night" to his neighbours, and he bears the sombre marks of his forced isolation in his doleful countenance.

There are in existence some very curious and remarkable historical treatises on the corporations and trade customs of the bakers of Paris, tracing their industry from the time when all citizens were compelled to bake their bread in the public ovens, which were the properties of great lords, or of religious establishments. These public ovens were sources of great profit, since every citizen was compelled to bake his bread in them, paying to the proprietor a fixed price. It was in the beginning of the fourteenth century that the Parisians obtained permission from the sovereign to have private ovens in their own houses. The owners of the public ovens, however, did not give up their privileges without a struggle; as late as the beginning of the fifteenth century, in some parts of Paris, people who had private ovens were compelled to pay an indemnity to the reverend owners of the public ovens. This indemnity was called the

Little Oven Tax—a tax that was not completely abolished before 1675. The history of the quarrels between the *grand panetier* of the court, who received the taxes due from the bakers to the king, and the provost of Paris; and again between the town bakers, the bakers of the suburbs, and the country bakers, who had each their separate and peculiar privileges, may be found in the pages of Levasseur and Boland. Therein also are lists of the vexatious fines and taxes which the journeyman baker was compelled to pay to the authorities. His reception as a master baker was conducted with a quaint ceremony. On the day appointed for his initiation, he presented himself at the door of the meeting-room, holding a new glazed earthenware pot, which was filled with cakes and nuts, saying, "Master, I have served my four years. Behold! here is my vessel full of nuts." Then the master of the craft asked the clerk in attendance if this were true. When the clerk replied in the affirmative, the master returned the vessel full of nuts and cakes to the candidate, who forthwith shattered it against the wall. From that moment he was a master baker; and his reception was celebrated with a banquet. This ceremony remained in force from the fourteenth century to the seventeenth.

Then a tree, garnished with beans or oranges, was presented, instead of the earthenware vessel; and lastly, the presentation of a *louis d'or* sufficed.

The trade of baker must have been, in the olden time, one to try the temper of the most patient of men. At one period, a Paris baker could light his oven only on 290 days of the year. He could not bake on Sundays; and we are told that it was amusing to watch the bakers standing in their doorways on Monday mornings, with their ears stretched, to catch the first sound of the matin bell, when they might light their ovens. Then there was the great trial of the Queen's bread, in the making of which yeast was used, and in the course of which the doctors, called in to give their opinion as to the effect of bread made with yeast on health, fell out, to the great delight of the author of the *Malades Imaginaires*. If, however, in all these times of trouble and vexatious regulations, the poor journeyman baker was seldom at peace, at least he had the comfort of looking forward to the time when he might marry his master's daughter, and set up a shop for himself. But the poor journeyman bakers of to-day, who flit fretfully about in the twilight and in the dawn, have no such hope left. Capital, which

they can never have an opportunity of amassing, is necessary to open a baker's shop, even now when the monopoly has been destroyed. Here he will remain where I see him now, on this bleak winter night, in this cellar under the shop, with the red-hot mouth of the oven almost singeing his body; making and baking the bread of his fellow man to the end of his short life. Little unbroken rest has he, even by day; for he must watch once or twice in the daytime, the preparation for the night's batch of bread. The labour of kneading it is most unhealthy to him, driving the particles of flour into his lungs, and it cannot be advantageous to the bread. Still, the Paris journeyman baker vehemently opposes the introduction of kneading machinery, in the fear that it will leave him to starve; and up to this moment he has been able to restrict the use of bread-making machinery within very narrow limits. Although his wages are low, and his hope of advancement is almost *nil*, he clings to the old system, albeit it must bring him to an early grave. The labour of a working baker is so hard, that apprentices to it are seldom entered younger than eighteen years of age. The apprenticeship lasts during a year or eighteen months; and the premium paid to the master baker fluctuates between five and six pounds. At the

expiration of this short apprenticeship, he becomes a brigadier. It is his duty to heat the oven, to put the bread in it, and remove it, and generally to exercise the functions of a foreman. His wages are usually a trifle under four shillings per diem. In the bakery with him is that important workman called the First Help. It is he who kneads the bread, sending forth, as from the bowels of the earth, the groans and piercing cries that affright late-returning merry-makers. He shapes the dough into loaves, with the assistance of the Second Help. The first help earns about three and sixpence per diem; and his assistant has between half a crown and three shillings per diem. A fourth workman generally completes the staff of an ordinary Parisian bakery. This last is the drudge. He chops the wood, fetches the water, counts the loaves, and, in short, does all the needful drudgery, for something under two shillings per diem. The poor bakers are, I may observe, paid for over-work—in this way. When they have to bake more than seven batches of bread, each batch containing seventy loaves, the workmen receive fivepence each for the eighth batch, and a penny each for the ninth. In addition to these money payments, each workman is allowed to take away two pounds of bread daily; and it is this

two-pound loaf that we have so often seen under his arm, as he trotted away through the morning cold, to his bed. He is allowed, moreover, to eat as much bread as he pleases during the night. There are indulgent masters, who give the poor fellows a sip of white wine before they start home in the morning; but these are, I fear, rare exceptions.

There is no trade so poor, no handicraft so lowly paid, that it will not yield something to the avarice of the usurer or the skilful knave. These poor journeymen bakers were, some years ago, in the hands of a set of rascals, who kept agencies for finding places for journeymen bakers out of work. They charged the poor fellows whom they placed as much sometimes as thirty francs. But this overcharge was not the worst part of their operation, for no sooner had the poor journeymen paid the agent's fee, than this same agent earwigged his master, and obtained his discharge; so that the poor fellow was obliged to return once again to the usurer, and to pay thirty francs for another place. This scandalous grinding of the poor has ceased, however; and now the journeyman baker is protected against such rapacity; but still he is far from satisfied with the conditions under which he can obtain employment.

And no wonder. The Parisians will have new bread to dip into their matutinal coffee, so he must labour through the night. He must stand for hours between the current of night air and the mouth of the oven. He is thirty years old before he becomes a perfect workman: at forty, his strength is exhausted, and he is good for nothing. His sun is a smoky oil-lamp; the home of his waking moments—a stifling cellar. The air is charged with particles of flour that produce ophthalmia. He is cramped with rheumatism, and shaken with a chronic cough. The doctors who have examined the question, declare that it is impossible for a journeyman baker to pursue his vocation after he is fifty years of age. Melancholy, however, as the lot is of the Paris bread-maker, it is borne with patient courage. The trade is never in want of hands, and it is regularly established, like trades of happier promise, with its institutions, its *fêtes*, its houses of call, and its privileges. In the great freemasonry of labour which extends over France, the journeymen bakers are the children of Master Jacques; and under his protecting influence they make their tour of France." It is said that some seven or eight hundred young workmen annually start on this tour, full of hope, and with

faith in their patron saint, St. Honoré. Albeit, the French bakers have proved somewhat fickle towards their saints. In the first instance, they placed themselves under the protection of St. Pierre aux Lieus, because his *fête* was in the harvest time. But they abandoned St. Peter for St. Lazarus in the Middle Ages, because the latter had the power of curing leprosy; and it was then the general belief that contact with the fire predisposed men to this scourge. Four centuries and a half having elapsed since the bakers forsook the protection of St. Lazarus, it is not strange that the reasons for their desertion have been lost. It is more than probable that, having discovered contact with fire did not produce leprosy, they felt themselves at perfect liberty to choose another saint from the calendar. It is but justice to the bakers to add, that at least they have been faithful to their present saint during nearly four centuries; and that on the 16th of May in every year, they celebrate his feast. On this happy May-day the mournful bread-makers come forth from their bakeries betimes; attire themselves in their best; deck themselves out in the ribbons that mark their rank in their craft; and repair to the residence of the Mother. It should be understood by the reader, that the

Mother is the landlady of the house of entertainment where the various crafts of French working men meet. The Mother is a personage of great distinction, to whom apprentices and journeymen pay the utmost respect. On the morning of St. Honoré, when all the working bakers have assembled, they arrange themselves in procession, and, preceded by a band and a colossal cake, borne by two or three of their companions, proceed through the streets, to hear mass at the church of St. Roch. The religious service at an end, they march back to the house of the Mother, where they hold a banquet, only the members of their craft being present, with the addition of the Mother, who is the honoured guest. Plentiful invitations have been sent out to craftsmen of other trades for a ball in the evening. The printed invitations are ornamented with symbols of the craft, and have "Honour and Glory to Labour" for their motto. The bakers' ball is said to be remarkable among Paris working men's balls for the elegance of the wives and daughters who attend it; and for the polite manners that are shown at it. The poor pale fathers and brothers forget the fetid bakery and the blazing oven for the moment, and do their best to be gay. The morrow will find them, probably, more sombre than ever.

The bread-making of Paris gives work to nearly three thousand individuals. In the latest compiled statistics of Paris industry, it is stated that ninety per cent. of the journeymen bakers could read and write, and that sixty per cent. of them had their own furniture. These figures prove that the men are at once thoughtful and prudent. They have, indeed, few opportunities for dissipation, since Paris sleeps through their waking hours. Left much to themselves, the quiet reading of a paper over a pipe, is the amusement to which they naturally have recourse.

There is a legend concerning three gay bakers, which is described by Pierre Vinçard. These three rollicking children of the dough trough were named respectively Turlupin, Gautier-Garguille, and Gros-Guillaume. They were all three journeymen bakers, and worked together in the Quartier St. Laurent. They were bound together by a close and sincere friendship. The natural humour that was in them, bubbled over. Bread-making was too dull and tedious an employment for them, so they took to the stage. It is one thing to resolve to take to the stage, and another to find the stage. The three jolly bakers were reduced to the necessity of building their own platform. They hired an old tennis court,

and with their own hands raised a little theatre in it; they painted their own decorations; in short, they did everything, being unable to pay for help. On this rough stage they played all kinds of grotesque scenes, which they called *Turlupinades*—the hour of performance being from one till two o'clock in the afternoon, and the price of admission being about three halfpence. Turlupin played the low-comedy valets; Gros-Guillaume was the heavy moralist; and Gautier-Garguille was the pedant and family man. Their success was so great that it gave umbrage to the pretentious actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, who complained to the Cardinal de Richelieu that these vagabonds were injurious competitors; whereupon the Cardinal ordered the three jolly bakers to play one of their wild farces in his presence. The trio were so irresistibly comic, that they extorted many laughs even from his grave Eminence, who, in gratitude, ordered that they should be admitted to play on the stage of the Hôtel de Bourgogne; and in this way their denunciators were confounded. The end of the jolly trio, however, was a very sad one. In an evil moment, and carried away by the fun of the scene, Gros-Guillaume took it into his unlucky head to mimic some well-known peculiarities of a great

magistrate, who was present among the audience. The great man took this in evil part, and had the poor actor cast into prison, where he died. Appalled at the fate of Gros-Guillaume, his two companions took to flight. From their hiding-place they heard of his death. The news was too heavy for their gentle hearts, so they laid themselves down, and within a week were with poor Gros-Guillaume—beyond the reach of any earthly magistrate's vengeance. They were all three buried together in the church of St. Saviour, then the ordinary place of interment for actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

The three jolly bakers of the seventeenth century were put to rest, we venture to say, with much less pomp and ceremony than may be seen in these days, when a baker—a child of Master Jacques—is carried to his long home. The body of the dead journeyman baker is laid upon an open car; the car is surrounded by journeymen bakers, children of Master Jacques, who, decently attired and decorated with red, green, and white ribbons, are about to attend their lost companion to his grave. When the car moves forward, they march in step on either side of it, marking time with the long canes they carry in their hands, as symbols of their rank. Arrived at the grave in the cemetery, they range

themselves in a circle round the coffin; then two journeymen approach from opposite sides of the coffin, and lean towards each other over it. They make certain waves and signs with their canes, looking fixedly and mournfully at one another the while; then they raise a plaintive cry, beat their breasts with their left hands, and whisper in each other's ear, over the coffin. All this is repeated three or four times; then the body is lowered into the grave. A journeyman approaches, and a broad black cloth is thrown over him and the grave. A groan seems to rise out of the earth—a bystander need not be very acute to make up his mind that the said groan proceeds from the covered journeyman. It is answered by a wail of lamentation from the assembled men of the craft; and then the earth rattles over the dead man's breast; and he who has passed his weary life, ill-paid and over-worked, making the bread of his fellow men, is left to his long sleep.

CHAPTER V.

OUR ARTIST IN MEAT.

It was on a certain Easter Sunday that I discovered the artistic genius of our butcher. I was going for a walk, to see the Parisians in their new clothes, carrying their Easter offerings about, and showing themselves on the Boulevards and in the Champs Elysées, when my attention was arrested at our gateway by a select group of admirers, to whom our butcher, usually a taciturn man, was addressing himself with animation. The group consisted of neighbouring cooks and housemaids, of the grocer's boy opposite, of the poultry merchant, the black wood and charcoal merchant, and a hairdresser in the bud, who wore a comb in his Brutus with open pride. The picture upon which the admiring group were gazing was at least a curious one. The entire carcase of a fine calf was spread in the centre of the shop-front. Its four legs were thrust at right angles, and were the points to which the four corners of a flat even surface of white fat were fixed.

Upon this surface our butcher had, with consummate art, carved a most intricate, but withal graceful, design. At the borders, the fat was so finely pierced into patterns that, at a distance, it looked like lace; while the centre of the square was filled with a well-modelled clump of flowers. Carcases of sheep were arranged in artistic order round this central masterpiece; the back of each sheep being tattooed with flowing lines that would have roused the jealousy of the highest New Zealand chief. Our butcher, with his arms folded, and his ruddy face shining in the bright spring sun, stood with the noble *pose* of a conqueror waiting for his laurels. He said, with the view of impressing the little public about him with a due sense of the magnitude of his labours, "we were up at two o'clock this morning, every one of us." Even our *triste* baker paused as he entered the house, and smiled to see how gay an appearance our butcher's shop had put on. The entrance to the shop was a triumphal arch of butcher's meat. Two noble sides of beef were supporting pillars to *gigots* so shapely and solid, that for a moment I had a mind to write to the renowned British butcher, Mr. Slater, in London, begging him to look to his legs.

During two or three days, our butcher, having a

corner shop for the display of his art-workmanship in fat, and the delicacy of his touch on the backs of sheep, was a considerable personage in our neighbourhood. He appeared to be very popular, to boot. I have not the least hesitation in stating, that the poultry merchant and the hairdresser's apprentice and the journeyman baker have quite forgiven the descendants of Caboche, the slaughterman, their part in the detestable massacres of the Duke of Burgundy and the Count D'Armagnac. Yes: the part played by the butchers in the Paris doings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a savage and detestable part. Was it not the butchers, moreover, who carried a canopy over the head of Henry the Sixth of England when he entered Paris as King of France, in 1431? They were a rich corporation, with power to overbear every other trade, and they lorded it right heartily. When the doleful bell of St. Germain l'Auxerrois tolled on that fatal night for the Huguenots, the butchers were alert with their whetted steel. They did their part of the massacre. What said butcher Pizon, renowned for his activity in the bloodshed? When Charles the Ninth asked him whether there were any living Huguenots remaining in Paris, Butcher Pizon

answered his sovereign to his royal heart's content:—

"Sire," said the loyal butcher, "yesterday I threw one hundred and twenty of them into the river, and I've as many more for to-night."

The answer of the butcher tickled Charles mightily. According to Saintfoix, people thought his Majesty would never have finished laughing.

The children of ferocious Pizon and Caboche have power no longer to do mischief, nor have they the disposition. In the old time they had certain virtues, and these they are reputed to possess still. The wholesale butchers are most honourable and chivalrous in their dealings with each other. It is related of them, that at the cattle-market any master butcher will lend his neighbour twenty or forty pounds, without acknowledgment or receipt; and that, indeed, it is not unusual for a borrower to be ignorant of the name of his lender. So that, on market mornings, a master butcher is often heard shouting, "Last market I borrowed forty pounds of somebody. Who was it?" The master butchers of Paris may be divided into three classes. In the first place, there are what are called the carcase butchers, who buy cattle alive, slaughter it, and sell

the carcases wholesale. There were not more than sixty of these master butchers in Paris in the year 1851. Then there are the "regular" butchers, who slaughter their own meat; and, lastly, the strictly retail butchers, who buy the carcase, and sell the chop. The master butchers of Paris, before their trade was made free, were not more than five hundred strong. Their records prove that they were exceedingly charitable among followers of their own trade. These five hundred master butchers were, in 1851, supporting one hundred and twenty-two of their unfortunate fellow tradesmen. It was in 1848 that they voluntarily established a benefit society for their workmen, by levying a contribution of one sou on every bullock sold, and one centime on every sheep. This light charitable tax produced about 400*l.* per annum, and enabled the master butchers to give broken-down workmen a franc a day.

The butcher's trade is a melancholy and repulsive one at the best. The boy who is apprenticed to a Paris butcher has generally two years to serve. He is at once sent to the slaughterhouse; after six months he is promoted to the duty of killing; and lastly, he reaches the dignity of an *étalier*, who prepares the meat for display in the shop. The head men at the slaughterhouse are paid by the number

of animals that pass through their hands. They receive about 1*s.* 6*d.* for every ox; 1*s.* 2*d.* for every calf; and 1½*d.* for every sheep. The most skilful workmen in the slaughterhouses appear to gain occasionally as much as 8*s.* a day; but these fortunate individuals are rare, and in order to earn such wages, they must slave incessantly. They go to work, winter and summer, at two o'clock in the morning, and are drenched with water by the hour together. There are numbers of irregularly employed men about the slaughterhouses, who help the head slaughterman, and can earn, when they are employed, 2*s.* a day. These helps are a rude and dissipated set, who perform all the more repulsive parts of slaughterhouse duties. They have been reduced by stern necessity to their brutalizing employment. They are quite apart from, and utterly unlike in every respect, the men employed in the butchers' shops of Paris. The salesmen in these shops have much taste and some culture. Our butcher's salesman is the gossip of the neighbourhood. He has usurped the old barber's privileges of gossiping. He is carefully dressed, and carries a snow-white *serviette*. The shop, of which he is the presiding spirit, where he jokes with the cooks who come every day to bargain for the meat, and who

carry it off with them, is in no respect like an English butcher's shop. The meat lies upon marble slabs, and there is a certain elegance about every arrangement. Our butcher's salesman and help live with him on the most amicable terms. The salesman, in addition to his board and lodging, receives, probably, about 20*l.* per annum. An ordinary salesman, who is not boarded by his employer, will earn about 25*s.* a week.

If our neighbours cannot boast beef like that of old England, nor mutton like that which is fed on the sweet-scented English moors and downs; at least to them belongs the merit of having, three hundred years ago, seen the advantages and the propriety of having healthy slaughterhouses, without the gates of the city. The authorities had to deal with obstinate men in the Paris butchers of those days. They rebelled against the orders of Parliament. They looked to their own convenience, and not to the health of their neighbours, nor to the wholesomeness of their meat. The struggle went on between the authorities and the butchers from one century to the next, the butchers always having the best of the struggle.

According to Mercier, the slaughterhouses were, towards the end of the last century, in the middle

of the city; and the moaning of the dying animals could be heard by the passers-by, in the most frequented streets. Now and then, an ox, frantic from the clumsy blow of a slaughterman, would make his escape, and scatter terror through a neighbourhood.

Feydeau de Marville, when Lieutenant of Police, in 1740, made a great effort to drive the slaughter-houses out of the city; but the answer he obtained was, that the corporation of butchers were rich and powerful, and had great friends at Court. The year 1810 had opened before these powerful tradesmen were vanquished, and model slaughterhouses were established in the environs of Paris. There are now seven admirably organized slaughterhouses in the vicinity of the French capital. Neither sheep nor ox is ever seen in the streets. Every detail connected with the killing of animals, and the security of the consumer against insalubrious meat, is strictly regulated. The men who drive cattle from the markets to the slaughterhouses, are under inspectors, and are appointed by the prefecture of police. Directly after the animals arrive at the slaughterhouse they are examined by a government expert, and they cannot be sold as meat until he has certified that they are in a healthy condition.

Government inspectors also examine the meat exposed for sale in town; and that which they condemn as unfit for human food is sent to the Carnivora at the *Jardin des Plantes* to be consumed. The Paris slaughterhouses are surrounded with trees, not only to give them an agreeable aspect, but also to purify the air, which is charged with animal exhalations. The most stringent regulations enforce the cleanliness of every part of these establishments. No kind of animal matter is allowed to accumulate, on any pretext whatever. In short, it is not possible to conceive a precaution that has not been taken by the Paris authorities. The consequence is, that no Parisian is ever nauseated by seeing horrible loads of fresh hides or bones, or animals' heads passing through the streets. The *tripiers*, as well as the butchers, are strictly governed. And so about 251 million pounds of meat are prepared every year for the good citizens of Paris, with the least possible inconvenience or danger to them. This has been accomplished, no doubt, at the sacrifice of many of the ancient dignities of the master butchers.

The glorious days of the privileged Four Hundred are departed for ever. Time was when the master butchers were in the front of every public ceremony,

They were the observed of all observers when kings entered the city, or when there were public rejoicings at the birth or baptism of princes. They were in the enjoyment of high consideration when the first Revolution burst upon Paris. The master butchers being among the privileged classes, were wrath with the mob, who had dared to set up a democratic form of government. At the *fête* of the Federation only the working butchers presented themselves: the aristocrats, their masters, declining to exhibit any sympathy with the new order of things that had destroyed their ancient privileges. During the Revolution, even the old pagan procession of the Fat Ox destined for sacrifice, was discontinued. It had been the great show of Carnival time in Paris for many years. An eyewitness of the procession of 1739 describes how he saw an ox with a branch of red laurel over its head, and covered with embroidered cloth, led through the streets by the butchers' men. Upon the back of the ox was seated a child, who was called the King of the Butchers. The young king wore a blue scarf, and carried in one hand a golden sceptre, and in the other, a naked sword. The butchers were dressed in red and white, and capped with turbans. This grotesque procession was preceded through the streets by a band of violins, fifes,

and drums. When, in 1805, the butchers managed to have their ancient procession through the streets restored, they found their inventive faculties restricted by the severity of the police regulations. The number of butchers who might accompany the fat ox through the streets was limited, and the costume of the masqueraders was exactly described. The government of the great Napoleon ordered that a child dressed to resemble Cupid, or rather undressed to resemble Cupid—should be mounted on an ox weighing as nearly as possible thirteen hundred pounds. The ox was to be richly caparisoned, his horns were to be gilded, and he was to be surrounded by twelve working butchers, who were to wear all the "attributes of their profession."

The procession of the Fat Ox has lasted down to the present time; but each year it has become more tawdry. It has fallen in public estimation; it is laughed at and scoffed at as out of date; but it is the only remnant left of the ancient street splendours of the butchers. It has, moreover, its commercial use to a few, and so it struggles on from year to year, paying grotesque calls at the Tuileries, and at the ministries of State. It delights the children, who anticipate a peep at the fat ox on Shrove Tuesday

as keenly as they anticipate a large consumption of pancakes. These are sharp business times, and now the fat ox is merely the splendid advertisement of an enterprising master butcher. His name becomes a household word throughout all Paris. There is a butcher in the Rue St. Roch, who, since the year 1851, has been the owner of eight of the fat oxen that have been paraded at the close of the Carnival. Last February, while his prize ox was being rolled along the Boulevards in a car of triumph, followed by a shivering bevy of nymphs in ballet-girl costume, grouped on an open chariot; and horsemen disguised as old women, monkeys, or dogs; he had suspended before his shop, a great curtain, upon which in letters of gold were enumerated the prize oxen of this proud butcher. The tawdry procession, preceded by a band and followed by a troop of grave Dragoons, went under the windows of the Emperor's palace, and the grave face of the hero of Solferino looked down from a balcony upon the butcher's masquerade.

Our butcher is a grave, plain, homely man, who, it is most probable, looks down with ineffable contempt upon the ox with the gilded horns, and the tawdry ballet girls, who follow in his wake. The

Paris butchers of the new school have broken completely with the ancient spirit of their proud trade, and our butcher is of the new school. I have endeavoured to show that he is something more than a plain butcher. Just as the coiffeur is an artist in hair, he is an artist in meat—a sculptor in fat! It is not because he despises a tawdry show dragged through the streets in the bleak month of February, and will not present himself before his sovereign, with the mask of a monkey upon his robust shoulders, that he is to be set down as a prosaic unimpressible slayer of sheep and oxen. He is rather to be taken as a tradesman who has educated himself out of spangles and tinsel, and has taken his rank among the more advanced butchers, who have laboured to destroy the grossness of the shambles, and to show a work of art on the hind-quarters of a sheep. I can see no reason why some of our butcher's designs for the decoration of veal and mutton should not be included in those interesting Exhibitions of Art applied to Industry, which are held from time to time under the Crystal Roof in the Champs Elysées. I only know that since Easter Sunday last, when I saw that masterpiece in veal, and those pretty sketches in mutton, which

our Paris butcher displayed with pardonable pride, I have more than once wondered whether, when actively engaged in the consumption of one of his *gigots*, I were not ruthlessly putting my barbarian teeth through a masterpiece.

CHAPTER VI.

MONSIEUR BÉBÉ'S PURVEYOR OF "PLAISIRS."

THERE is a plaintive cry that rises from Paris streets about sundown, accompanied with the monotonous sound of a wooden rattle, that is delightful to the ear of French children, and has been a familiar sound, through life, to the oldest inhabitant of Paris. The street-seller of *plaisirs* or *oublies* as they were called long, long years ago, is generally an elderly woman of somewhat lively temperament, dressed with scrupulous neatness, her head covered with a cap, white as mountain snow. She must needs be amiable, and of a kindly habit of mind, for it is her business to please, and attract children to that magic round green box, in which she holds those frail crisp cakes, curled in the shape of sugar-bags, which have delighted—well, how many generations shall we say?—of the vivacious, light-witted children of *Lutetia*. These *oublies* of sweet paste, cooked between hot irons, have come direct down, ac-

cording to some authorities, transmitted to the Paris *bébés* of to-day, from the Obliophores, who used to cry their cakes, or obolios, about the streets of ancient Athens. Certain it is, however, that the rising generations of Parisians have been delighted with the toothsome *oublie* or *plaisir* from a very remote period. Time was, when the King of France had his Officer of the Mouth, whose duty it was to offer *oublies* to the royal guests. Centuries ago the street vendors of *oublies* (which were carried about hot, in a basket laid out with white linen) tempted their customers to gamble with dice for their dainties. Sometimes a very lucky gambler would win the basket and its entire load. Levasseur, in his history of the working classes, describes how the students, when they had won a whole basket of *oublies*, were in the habit of hanging them outside their windows in triumph. But when the makers of *oublies* or *oublayers* were formed into a corporation under regular statutes, the use of dice was prohibited, and the *oublayers* gradually developed into a great corporation of pastrycooks, making infinite varieties of pastry. Considerable skill was demanded from the journeyman pastrycook, even in the thirteenth century; for then he was compelled, by the statutes of his

corporation, to prove that he could make at least a thousand of the cakes called *heules* in a day. In the old laws which governed the Paris pastrycooks, there are many excellent ones, which punish them severely for using unwholesome materials. Many privileges were accorded to them, such as the exclusive right of selling pastry to the religious bodies, &c.; and time was, when vassals were compelled, on certain days of the year, to offer *oublies* to their feudal lords; so that the *Oublayer* occupied a somewhat important position. On the fête-day of his craft—the day of St. Michael—he accordingly gave himself great airs, proceeding to church on horseback, in grotesque costume, accompanied by drums and music. At Pentecost again he was wont to cause his *oublies* to fall from the roof of the church at one part of the service, and to let birds loose, with *oublies* on their wings, at another part of it. These early pastrycooks appear to have given much trouble to the authorities of the city, from time to time. At one moment street vendors of their cakes tempted poor little children to steal, in order to buy them. At another time it was discovered that cheap pies filled with bad meat were being sold at low prices, and were strongly flavoured with onions in order to disguise the odour

of the meat. All these irregularities were met with new and more stringent apprenticeship laws, and other regulations. In 1566, it was ordered that every pastrycook must serve an apprenticeship of five years; and that before he could be received into the craft, he must show his skill by making six large pies, and the usual varieties of *oublies* and other small pastry.

By the side of these *oublayers*, or pastrycooks, grew the no less ancient and remarkable gingerbread makers, who proudly trace the origin of their delicacy to the ancient Greeks, who loved that famous gingerbread of Rhodes, which was flavoured with honey. The pastrycooks and the gingerbread makers crossed each other's path angrily more than once. The pastrycooks had the privilege, on *fête* days, of keeping their open ovens at the church doors, that they might sell hot cakes to the faithful. Their activities and rivalries, however, created so many disturbances that they were at last driven from all the approaches to the temple, and replaced by the quiet gingerbread vendors, who brought their sweet stock ready made. These gingerbread makers appear to have been, for some centuries, an orderly and kindly set of men. In the statutes granted to their corporation in 1596, they express affectionate and

compassionate sentiments towards one another. A journeyman who met a fellow journeyman in distress on the road was bound to lend him two crowns, or to become security for him for that sum. Again, if a travelling gingerbread maker heard that a fellow workman anywhere in the neighbourhood through which he was passing, was in distress, he was bound to go out of his road to help him, and to watch at his bedside. Time has not brought many changes to the article, the idea of which was, we are told, borrowed from the honey bread of ancient Rhodes; but the classification of the thousand and one developments of the pastrycook's art which modern times have seen, would fill hundreds of closely printed pages. The old woman is ambling along, under my window, shrilly crying her *plaisirs* while I am reading the evening paper after dinner, just as her great great great grandmother cried to them in the dark wicked old streets of the ancient capital; and she goes shuffling past the gorgeous establishments where the *élite* of French society languidly consume *babas*, *savarins*, and *nougats*. She is the true child of the original French pastrycook, and, with her simple dainties, comes direct to us from Athens. I doubt not she has a mighty contempt for the incomprehensible kickshaws she sees through the plate-

glass of Félix's fashionable establishment, nor can she look with much kindness on the *darioleurs* or manufacturers of such cheap pastry, as *brioches* and cakes, which are sold by street hawkers. The only rival with whom, I suspect, she can cordially shake hands, is the gingerbread vendor, who dates from Rhodes, and who has his two weeks of glory at the *Barrière du Trône* every Easter, when the gingerbread fair is held. The pastrycooks, however, have not reached their present condition of showy prosperity, without having braved many dangers and experienced many heartburnings. Their quarrels with the bakers have been frequent and violent. Grave lawyers have debated again and again where the baker ended and the pastrycook began. And now, when every French subject has been declared as free to make his own *baba* as he has long been to toss his own pancake, the artist in pastry is not free from his daily anxieties. His daily troubles over the exquisitely delicate contents of his oven are heavy. The slightest burn will spoil his day's labours. He is an artist dealing with the most delicate and perishable materials. He has generally been a workman who, by thrift and incessant labour, has saved money enough to open a shop, and take the profits of his own taste and skill.

Remark him as he occasionally appears in his shop of gilding and mirrors; as he peeps into the little bright steel oven at the end of the counter, where the *babas* are kept hot; and you'll see that he has a thoughtful pleasant face. He is in a snow-white dress, although he has become the master of this dazzling shop. He is the art-workman still, underneath it or behind it. He has his apprentices, whom he teaches how to minister to the sweet tooth of Paris. It appears that there are about seventeen hundred persons employed in Paris on the manufacture of pastry, and that of this number nearly seven hundred are apprentices. The startling proportion of apprentices is easily accounted for by the fact that every youth who is being brought up as a cook, must serve some part of his time under a confectioner. Parents like also to put their children out with pastrycooks, believing that the pastrycook easily earns his livelihood; while the young apprentice on his side is delighted with the prospect of living in a land of cakes. The reality is wofully unlike the dream, as any master pastrycook is ever free to confess. In the first place, the poor little apprentice boy tastes few of the cakes. The broken and the stale ones are occasionally reserved for him. Generally, he does not get to bed until after the shop

is closed at midnight. Then he must be up betimes in the morning, to trot off to the market with his master to buy butter, eggs, and fruit. It is he who carries home the heavy load of marketing in a basket upon his head. It is he who runs all the errands, and bears all the orders out to customers' houses. When he has completed his apprenticeship, and is put in the little bakery behind the shop to help in the preparation of delicate tarts and cakes of all descriptions, all his illusions have generally vanished. He lodges and is fed at his master's house, and receives a monthly salary of about one pound. The workmen who are over him, and who have reached the top of their profession, and who are also lodged, and fed in the house, earn from two pounds ten shillings to three pounds ten shillings a month. The young journeyman finds himself associated with two or three fellow workmen, with whom he works, eats, and sleeps. They form his world. The life is so monotonous and weary that most of the journeymen pastrycooks long to change their condition, and very few of them remain in the dark little bakery to the end of their days.

Their case, however, is not so sad as that of their neighbours the confectioners, who make the vast quantities of *bonbons* of every conceivable variety,

which are consumed in Paris mainly at New Year, and at Easter. Few, if any, of the light-hearted holiday folk, who carry off *pralines* from Boissier's or *Diables roses* from Siraudin's, ever give one minute's thought to the great workshops, in the *Rue des Lombards*, where poor fellows have been working twelve hours a-day in an almost red-hot atmosphere, to turn out these succulent morsels. Here, sugared almonds are made by steam, so great is the demand. The sugar is boiling in vast kettles, and is carried hither and thither in little vessels by skilled men, who turn it, with a twist of the hand, into a hundred shapes. The men have rank according to their skill. He who presides over the oven whence barley-sugar and delicious syrups are evolved, may be said to be chief of the workshop; and has his annual salary of about 100*l.* a year. The second man in rank is the maker of burnt almonds—the favourite *praline* of the Parisians—and can earn something under 3*s.* 6*d.* a day. The sugared almond makers, again, are divided into first and second-class hands. The first-class man has an annual salary of about 85*l.* per annum. The second-class men are paid by the day, and earn about 4*s.* daily. The workmen who are called officers, are the artists who make the fancy *bonbons*. They have nearly always a fixed salary

of 72*l.* a year. The decorators who paint the *bonbons*, although they are expected to have considerable artistic taste, earn, as a rule, little more than 4*s.* per diem. The poor fellows, indeed, who pass so many hours in rooms like furnaces, and who are required to display great taste and skill in producing exquisite morsels for the comfit-box of a princess, are generally very badly off; because it is impossible to get work all the year round. Sometimes they are during three months, and sometimes, even during six months, without the opportunity of earning a ten-sou piece at their trade. When New Year's Day and Easter have passed and gone, the sweetmeat maker has four or five months of slack season to anticipate. He depends upon the caprices of fashion. He has not the regular trade which the cheerful old lady who sells *plaisirs* enjoys. Winter and summer, in spite of wind and snow and rain, she comes chirping along the street in the early evening. The great season may be at an end; Trouville, Dieppe, and Biarritz may be crowded with the lions and lionesses of Paris; but there is no lack of the *plaisir* seller's little *bourgeois* customers. Young *bourgeois* has not gone to the seaside—not he! His father and mother, in their most ambitious moments, never did more in the way of pleasure tra-

velling than a day in the forest of St. Germain, at the *Fête des Loges;* and a day at Fontainbleau, when Madame threw cakes to the carp in the tank behind the palace. All the great folk may desert the fashionable quarters: the *plaisir* seller cares not. Here are her middle-class little customers, lisping their baby French about her box, in the Bois de Boulogne, or in the Champs Elysées; and trotting off triumphantly with her sweet wares. She will neither decorate them, nor alter, by the least bend, the shape of them. The first teeth of ten thousand thousand Paris babies have approved them. They are palatable to high and low. The mighty young count leans out of his carriage, drawn by four bleating goats, for his *plaisir;* and the mechanic's little urchin, in his white sugar-loaf nightcap, buys from the same box. Madame, the vendor, is proud of the universality of her popularity.

"At least," she says, "there is equality before the *plaisir* merchant. First come, first served. One moment, my good baron, in the hat and feathers. Little Antoine, the carpenter's son, asked before you."

CHAPTER VII.

MONSIEUR AND MADAME PUFF.

MONSIEUR and Madame Puff must have the profoundest contempt for the clumsy contrivers of British advertisements. The poet of Moses is a barbarian when compared with these two exquisite artists, who puff so gently, and, withal, so discreetly and artistically, that the reader is charmed, while his pockets are opened. He laughs, while he is despoiled. He applauds, while he is robbed. Neither Monsieur nor Madame Puff would deign to write the doggrel—nor pen the puff direct—which may be found in the advertising columns of English newspapers. The lady, be it observed, is a viscountess; and the gentleman is a personage of distinction, who dresses like D'Orsay; is as particular with his knife and fork as Brillat de Savarin; who would not trust his peruke to a second-rate artist for the world; whose tailor is Dusautoy; who buys his *bonbons* (or has them) at Boissier's; upon whom Pivert delicately casts his choicest perfumes;

and who rests from his labours, on Tortoni's threshhold.

The return of the high world is welcome to the *chroniqueur* it is true; but for the *chroniqueuse* it is a high festival. It is she who tells the world who is the lady whose taste is to be followed; and could give the reader a complete inventory of the Empress's wardrobe. The Viscountess de Renneville deigns to inform the readers of the *Patrie* what they *must* wear, if they care to live; and, with an amiability that is refreshing, the shops at which all people who respect themselves, must purchase their powder and their paint. She follows boldly in the wake of the *chroniqueurs*, and will not yield to them in courage. If the Baroness Beaujolais will be beautiful, she must pay the penalty, and become material for a newspaper paragraph. I suspect that if the baroness paid all her bills as cheerfully as she pays this, she would be popular with the tradesmen of the Rue Richelieu and the Chaussée d'Antin. In our own country, it is alleged by the malicious, that ladies love to be seen and admired, and that they can bear admiration for many hours together. Be this as it may, I brave contradiction when I state that if the fashionable ladies of Paris suffer when their charms,

their graces, and their taste are "put into the newspapers," their martyrdom must last, ay, sometimes longer than their charms. Publicity appears to be the price they pay for beauty. Some pay who ought not to be taxed. Does a lady sing? She may have as much idea of dancing on the tight-rope as of warbling her wood-notes wild in a concert-room. Yet she shall not escape the *chroniqueur*. She may escape the *grands journeaux*, but not the *petits*. An infinitely small *chroniqueur* babbles in an infinitely small paper; and Madame unconsciously furnishes her paragraph to the fly that was buzzing about the *soirée intime*. The little fly meant no harm. He had his columns gaping. Rather did he mean to be *gracieux*, and that Madame should thank him. He has put her on a pedestal. It is true it is no higher than the thickness of a wine-biscuit, but he has done his little best. And, provided we all do our best, some thanks are due to us. The lofty pedestals are for the great ladies. They eat *soupe-aux-choux*, who cannot order a *suprême*.

See how royally a Viscountess sets to work! But then she empties her *largesse* out of a coronet; and the crowds about her are of the first quality. She begins by telling her readers that she has great news

to give them: "Fashionable ladies (who make fine or bad weather in the world of fashion) wear hats so small that they fall into the category of *bibis* hats. We are told that it is the English fashion. Will France consent to give up her prerogative in matters of taste? All the costumes now in vogue are of the English type. Jackets, waistcoats, boots, tucked petticoats, veils tight to the face, and little turban hats garnished with a bird's wing. I look everywhere in vain for Paris fashions. The traditional simplicity and elegance are disappearing. Women no longer wear toilettes, they wear costumes. Fashion is only an open-air carnival. What is to be done? Protest? What shall we say? Let us indicate where rich and artistic taste is still to be found. We are backed by a very high authority. The decrees of Her Majesty the Empress put an end to these too audacious toilettes, into which ladies of fashion had thrown themselves, as into a steeple-chase. Eccentricity proves nothing. She is the daughter of Folly and Burlesque. True elegance captivates public opinion, and never disgusts it." With this flourish of trumpets—of silver trumpets—the Viscountess proceeds to tell her readers how the world of fashion is to be set right again; and France is to resume the enjoyment of her prerogative in matters

of dress. She gives the name and address of the patriotic millinery establishment; but, since I confess that I am not quite so much interested in the house in question as her ladyship appears to be, I shall give the initial only of the great milliner who has deserved so well of her country, and of the Viscountess. Let the reader mark with what a dainty hand her ladyship touches the shop:—

"The Maison G—— has remained what it always was, in spite of all the burlesque fashions that have been produced, and are still being produced. The Maison G—— has discerned that France would sooner or later retake possession of her acquired rights; and has awaited the reaction that is now appearing. Not that the Maison G—— took no initiative—far from it. The Maison G—— dictates laws in the dominions of ladies of society and of rich foreigners who never follow the vagaries of the age. Instead of repelling fancy, the Maison G—— propagates it; but holds that it should be an expression of our own nationality, and not of that of foreigners. Here are the last creations of the Maison G——."

Follow—lists of dresses, laces, &c. The Maison G——, we are told, has distinguished itself at Compiègne by a Lyons blue velvet dress, in the style "our mothers wore at the time of the Direc-

tory." But "our mothers," we are reminded, could not boast the "*habit sportman*," which is now the pride of the Maison G——. After some warmly coloured descriptions of other triumphs of the Maison G——, the Viscountess is fairly carried away by her enthusiasm. "Do you know," she exclaims, presuming disdainfully on the ignorance of her readers, "do you know, or have I told you, that the Maison G—— is enlarging its lace department, which is to be an artistic speciality of European fame? G——'s laces will be cited as masterpieces. They will not admit of comparisons, because G—— dominates the trade in cashmeres, silks, dresses, intelligent innovations, and consequently in lace."

From the Maison G—— the Viscountess turns in ecstasy to the Ville de Lyon. She is poetic over the gloves and petticoats. And then she lets her readers into a secret, with delightful grace. "A bit of intimate confidence—Her Majesty the Empress wears little veils, spotted and fringed with chenille, and sprinkled with jet beads. Do you love secrets? All ladies delight in them, especially when they are on the subject of beauty." The Viscountess becomes skittish:—"Suppose I give you the means of being beautiful for many years,—for always,—will you grant that I have some talent and a little influence?

Bear in mind, that, in order to please you and to be useful to you at the same time, I penetrate everywhere, even into chemical laboratories. If we lived in the time of the Ruggieris and the Cagliostros, it would be horrible; for, perhaps they would show me Satan, as at Robin's. *But*, in the laboratory of Madame D., No. —, Rue de Grenelle St. Honoré, I have found a young and charming woman, who does not in the least resemble a magician or an astrologer, and who deals conscientiously with woman's beauty, just as a horticulturist cultivates rare flowers in a hothouse. Madame D. gives learned consultations in the art of putting back the clock of life. She owns precious receipts for fading beauty." Follow—lists of the lady's cosmetics and waters, with the price of the *flacon*. The Viscountess is good, indeed, to her readers. They shall not, if she can help it, have a defect; men and women who read the *Patrie* shall alike be "beautiful for ever." Therefore the Viscountess takes up in her delicate hands one of the electrical tooth-brushes of Doctor L. Addressing her readers, she says:—"Doctor L. appears to me like the Balthazar Claès of Balzac in the *Recherche de l'Absolu*. He has found a new vital element in chemistry. The most shattered teeth are strengthened. Did the ogre in *Tom*

Thumb use an electrical tooth-brush? This brush, with the Doctor's dental elixir (the *depôt* is in the *Rue de Ménars*), is 'a miraculous talisman.'" From the miraculous tooth-brush, the Viscountess travels gracefully to Parma violet powder, violet oil, and violet soap.

I know there are ill-natured people who will put all her ladyship's grace and love of the elegant down as so much puffery. I confess that it would take space to prove that her ladyship is as simple and guileless as a shepherdess. But *allons donc*, would the Viscountess de Renneville be guilty of a *réclame?* Is she not in the confidence of the Empress? It appears to me that she is merely a little indiscreet. She has been carried away by her admiration of the patriotism of the Maison G——, and by her valiant resolve not to be outwitted by the audacious band of *chroniqueurs*, who sit every evening at that famous table in the *Café Grosse Tête*.

Madame has a husband, who attends to the graceful puffery of men's fashions, giving himself the airs of a D'Orsay. He is a shabby *fine fleur* at the best. He has a few dozen sentences and quotations, which he uses *ad nauseam*, but which please his customers or the journals which employ him. Say he has a fashionable hairdresser in hand. He writes an

album for him, and invents names for varieties of head-dresses. I have one of these specimens of Monsieur Puff's ingenuity before me. The hair-dresser is the renowned Monsieur de Byst, of the Faubourg St. Honoré. He has invented, we are informed, twenty-four new styles for dressing the human hair. Monsieur Puff runs through and gracefully recommends them. The Pompadour is a charming composition, so called after the favourite of Louis the Fifteenth, whose taste in the dressing of her hair was exquisite. The Goddess has a *grandiose* effect. The *Incroyable* is in a rich style, that makes us long for its general adoption. The First Step, a charming arrangement for the hair of a young lady just entering the world. The Sovereign gives great sweetness and softness to the face of a blonde. The New Diana is graceful and bold in outline.

And so Monsieur Puff works, side by side, with Madame the Viscountess!

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO DÈLUGES OF BONBONS.

THE end of the old year and the first day of the new year supply the observant stranger with material enough to make up a dozen sparkling comedies. At this festive season of the year it is the custom of Paris ladies to receive as many presents as their relatives, friends, and acquaintances may be pleased to give them,—or may give them without being pleased. The lady sits in her *salon* on New Year's Day—in festive dress—to receive her friends' presents,—and her friends, since these must be bearers of the presents. Her face is wreathed in smiles; and she exhausts herself in expressions of hypocritical astonishment as each visitor produces his addition to the general stock. They come trooping up! There is no need to ask the *concierge* whether Madame is at home. Is the pump in the yard at home? Is the bell-pull at home? Would a troop of the Municipal Guard have the strength to remove Madame from that

seat in the *salon*, where she is receiving her taxes? An unsophisticated foreigner, seated at Madame's side, is simple enough to think that these satin bags of chocolate creams; these marqueterie tables; these bronzes of Voltaire from the vestibule of the Théâtre Française; these *bonbon* boxes of costliest enamel; this onyx tray, on which Madame will cast the diamonds from her fingers to-night (having narrowly examined it to see whether the price-mark has been inadvertently left upon it)—are voluntary gifts brought to the lady's feet, as but the most trifling and unworthy tokens of the givers' friendship. Gifts forsooth!—they are *étrennes!*

Let the reader who desires to know exactly the meaning of *étrennes*, and how the word is understood in Paris at the present time, consult the Paris papers in December and January. He will see the spirit in which this gigantic tax is levied—and is paid. The French are undoubtedly the most ingenious people on the continent of Europe. They say that they are at the head of civilization; that they are not travellers, because, to travel beyond their frontiers is to journey from perfection to imperfection—an explanation which is open to dispute. Their claim to superlative ingenuity may, however, I think, be at once conceded to them. A few in-

stances of startling ingenuity in the way of misspelling are included in the *étrennes* of information which the papers gave to their readers last new year. The *Opinion National* is most conspicuous in ingenious incorrectness. *La Presse*, wherein Emile de Girardin drums to an obstinately deaf world, has some rich errors in its records of John Bull's doings: but the *Opinion* may boldly challenge every other purveyor of ignorance. This journal publishes the World's Obituary for 1863: and informs its readers that England has lost among other worthies—"Maurice Landsclowne, ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, President of the Cabinet, and of the Privy Council"—"Sir Taton Syke"—"Sir Georhe Cornwal Levis"—and "the poet and composer Ch. Glow"—author of "Jeannette and Jeannot." In addition to these losses, we have to deplore the death—according to the *Opinion*, of "Augustus Leopold Ileg"—a distinguished painter. The two last names are incomparably ingenious transformations of Chârles Glover and Augustus Egg.

It is at the toymakers—in the sweet realms of Boissier, Siraudin, or Marquis—in the crystal saloons of the Palais Royal—in the show-rooms of Susse or Giroux—and, for the poorer folk, in the deal boxes

that line the Boulevards,—that the inexhaustible ingenuity of the French inventive faculty is to be found at its very wildest freaks. One present which the *bonne* makes to her young Monsieur on New Year's morn is made of white sugar and chocolate: the design is indescribable in the pages of an English book. We English may be, as our neighbours assert, foolishly squeamish; but no argument would persuade the least squeamish among us that the *bonne's* gift was not at once coarse and nasty. Why not a chocolate dust-hole? On the Boulevard des Italiens have been ranged, for the laughter of the passers-by, a series of nude figures, recommending themselves as presents, by the outrageous indecency of their attitudes. They have gone off briskly, amid the merriment of the holiday-makers, at very good prices. But these were trifles light as air, and had nothing to do with the serious business, on which every unhappy bachelor was bound last New Year's Eve. For this morning, visits had been paid to the saloons of Giroux and of Tahan. The Emperor had been among the costly trifles; and had deigned to select some most expensive inutilities. The shops of the great tradesmen of the Boulevards and the Rue de la Paix had been packed with dismal purchasers until midnight. Men

were stationed at the doors of pet confectioners' shops, to regulate the entrances and the exits of the thousands of actors who were bound to play a part on the morrow. In vain did they now and then hug themselves in the belief that they had discovered something quite new, that was very cheap. Their friends quickly undeceived them. By the costliness of their doings on New Year's Eve, would they be judged throughout 1864. Their gift would lie upon Madame's table, with heaps of others; and it must not be the worst—that is, the cheapest—of the collection. You cannot deceive Madame, I assure you.

I was surveying the collection of New Year taxes which had been levied by Madame de H. Her fair daughter was at hand. I lifted a very pretty box, lightly and brightly put together. I remarked that the taste shown in it was exquisite. The young lady shrugged her shoulders, and answered—"That, Monsieur: I'm sure it didn't cost ten francs!" Unhappy wight is he who had given that exquisite little box of sweetmeats to Madame de H. It is true that he is only a young *employé* at the Ministry of the Interior, and that he has only a very few hundred francs per annum: nevertheless, he should not have done this thing. He should have put the

watch his mother gave him into "Piety's fair Mount" —and have lived for a month or two on *haricots*— and, in this way, afforded to march boldly into the renowned establishment of Siraudin. These are not the days for sentimental gifts. Gifts are not held to the heart: they are appraised. There are people here who are known to stint themselves and their families for months, in order to make a grand appearance, as distributors of gorgeous *étrennes* on New Year's Day. I heard of one family a few weeks since, who decided to remain away from Paris during this "festive season of the year," because the *étrennes* they were compelled to give last year cost them 20,000 francs—or eight hundred pounds! This sum may appear an exaggeration to the simple reader; but it is not a startling one to the observer who has been a watchful atom in the crowds that have seen the articles in the shops of the toymakers, the chocolate manufacturers, the confectioners, and the jewellers of Paris. Time was when children were content with the rough horse, the bran doll, and the plain battledore and shuttlecock. But see the luxury that is unfolded to the sight of Paris children in these days! Here are dolls that are to be bought for gold; dolls' furniture at prices that would comfort much living nakedness and suffering of the poor arrondisse-

ments; toy boats (to float in the fountain basin of the Tuileries Gardens), at the price of a mechanic's week's labour; mimic warriors, and cannon and drums and trumpets almost as dear as man's war finery. Hither must the taxed of New Year's Day come: for Madame has children—and children who know what good toys are. They are keen housewives, and calculate to a fraction what a doll's toilette apparatus should cost. Their dolls wear real lace; have wardrobes crammed with expensive dresses; and sport boots made by the first bootmakers. So Madame's children are not to be put off with simple trifles. "The contest is," I heard a man say at a *café*, as he chuckled at the idea, which he kept steadily before him, that all his friends were abroad in the country—"the contest is, who shall give a candle, and get a column."

Just as certain shrewd commercial men of the city of London have been known to declare their income to the income-tax gatherer to be ten thousand pounds when it was only half this sum, the ambitious Parisian implies that he is wealthy, on New Year's Day, by giving presents he cannot afford. The shopkeepers have humoured this social weakness to the utmost. Their ingenuity and daring have kept pace with his extravagance. And the result has

just been seen—and laughed at, and stared at, and squibbed. M. Siraudin, dramatist and confectioner, has known his Paris too long and well to make a mistake, when endeavouring to humour his fellow-citizens. He has a clear perception of the direction in which the wind sets. A more sagacious nose is not shown along the whole length of the Boulevards. The public should have an expensive plaything; and he would set it up in his shop, and crowds should besiege his doors.

Siraudin made a doll: dressed it in blue velvet, covered it with real English point lace, and sprinkled it with *real* diamonds, until it was worth something more than one thousand pounds sterling! He planted this precious toy upon a pedestal: the *chroniqueurs* went to work—and in a few days there were mighty crowds in the Rue de la Paix. Siraudin was in everybody's mouth—and so were Siraudin's *bonbons*. The papers told the public how many reams of paper, how many pounds of sugar, how many yards of gold and silver cord Siraudin consumed in the service of his thousands of customers. On New Year's Day, Madame prized the satin bags full of sweetmeats, or *diables*, white or red, that were marked "Siraudin." The *Charivari* poked fun at the doll; and published drawings of little

girls in the Tuileries Gardens carrying dolls ornamented with diamonds and lace—and escorted, for safety, by a corporal's guard of *piou-pious*. In his doll, M. Siraudin showed the dramatist rather than the confectioner. He pointed his joke with diamonds —and so assured its success.

Just as on New Year's Day the ladies and children of Paris are agog, wondering who will be generous and who will be mean, so on Easter Sunday speculation is rife on the extent of the booty each household will secure. Ay, *secure* is the word, in default of a stronger one. Let us not be too nice. Stand not on the order of your giving, but give. Lent is at an end, and the days of Boissier and Siraudin have come again. Their rival windows are packed with sweetmeats of the costliest description. They cater only for heavily laden purses. The modest may go elsewhere. Are there not red eggs in the barrows of the "merchants of the four seasons," and in the greengrocers' windows? The poor *bourgeois* can buy his chocolate egg for a few sous to delight his children; but Siraudin and Boissier have nought to do with the offspring of little shopkeepers, as a glance at their gorgeous establishments will satisfy any beholder. Siraudin replaced the New Year's doll with an exquisitely modelled Cupid, and

the crowds came back again, and the establishment was packed with exquisites buying Easter eggs full of *bon-bons*, and costly surprises of every description. Siraudin is inexhaustible in the production of artistic whims, all expensive enough to satisfy the extravagance of the luckiest of stockbrokers. It being necessary to make Easter offerings in the shape of an egg, good M. Siraudin invented birds' nests of costly material (with real birds of gorgeous plumage fluttering over their sugar eggs). He had humming-birds with Easter eggs under them. Let the vulgar imitate him with a hedge-sparrow if they pleased, he was safe with his expensive skins. He would plant loving birds upon the eggs his customers should buy, and in this way at Easter, as on New Year's Day, reign supreme. It was charming to see the spirit in which the facetious journals remarked on the crowds of unhappy male victims, who were bound to carry these costly eggs to their female acquaintance. It is insinuated that the finest golden eggs fell to the share of the avaricious ladies who dwell round about Notre Dame de Lorette; elderly gentlemen being bound to offer ostrich eggs, while the *gandin* of twenty-two may carry to his adorable creature an egg no larger than that of a wren.

The Parisians were, moreover, amused with a happy sketch. Two ladies, gaudily dressed, are sitting amid their Easter offerings holding a friendly conversation. They have evidently taken a careful and accurate estimate of the value of the offerings. A sad thought has just struck one lady. There are no more forced levies on their friends possible before January the First, 1865. "Couldn't we invent some form of contribution for Michaelmas?" she asks her companion. M. Siraudin might help the ladies to an idea. Michaelmas geese with golden eggs in them might take; but, unfortunately for the fair tax-gatherers, the tax-payers are at Baden, or Trouville, or Biarritz, in September.

Among the Easter offerings made to the public in 1864, however, the enormous literary egg of M. de Villemessant is the most remarkable. It is called the *Grand Journal*, and a great journal it is. Its page is exactly one yard high and two feet in breadth. The editor says the French people wanted a lively weekly paper, with plenty in it, and he offers them amusement and the events of the week by the yard! The first number is undoubtedly amusing, and in no part more so than where the editor publishes a series of letters from his friends approving his scheme. The Great or Big Journal is not a

weekly newspaper; it is a weekly gossip. It abounds with anecdotes more or less personal; it recounts personal experiences with freedom. For instance, M. de Villemessant gossips about D'Orsay's tailor, and tells how, about twenty years ago, there lived in the Galerie de Valois, Palais Royal, a tailor —or, rather, an *artiste*—renowned for his waistcoat-making. The famous Count D'Orsay was a great patron of his, and he often went to London simply to take the Count's orders. This tailor, whose name was Blanc, was a clever fellow, with a taste for literature; he read everything that came out, and was thoroughly up in all the great questions of the day. He was the first to discover in Louis Ulbach, his compatriot, then young and unknown, the future man of talent, the clever and distinguished novelist of to-day. By dint of daily contact with an aristocratic *clientèle*, Blanc had gained a certain polish, which, however, had nothing pretentious about it. He was the son of a peasant, and had quitted his native village on foot, in order to make his way in the world. "I do not know the name of the village," M. de Villemessant goes on to say, "but it could not have been Guerande, for in that case Blanc would not have been obliged to leave it to make his fortune—a man's wealth being there esti-

mated according to the number of waistcoats he wears. While himself almost a child, he had become godfather to a little girl, who afterwards was left an orphan. When this happened, Blanc brought the child to Paris, and watched over her growth with a father's care. She was pretty and good, and so, by-and-by, the love of Blanc began to change its character, and he resolved to marry his god-daughter. She, in her turn, loved him, and the matter was arranged. Suddenly, however the girl, whose lungs had always been delicate, fell seriously ill. The doctors prescribed change of air, and she was sent to Ville d'Avray. Thither every day went poor Blanc, snatching a few hours from his business, and taking with him a little present of fresh flowers or early fruit for his *fiancée*. I often happened to meet him at the station, and then I was invariably made the confidant of his hopes and fears concerning the poor invalid. At the end of a year the young girl died, and was buried in the pretty cemetery of Ville d'Avray. This cemetery, unlike more pretentious places of its kind, is not a sculptor's studio, but simply a garden for the dead, where the trees, flowers, and insects all whisper the lullaby of those who sleep the eternal sleep. Every Sunday Blanc went to

Ville d'Avray, and passed the day regretting, weeping, and praying at the tomb of his *fiancée*. Towards evening, more tranquil, he would go and sit in the little summer-house of the *Restaurant de la Grille*, kept by the guard of the forest. The sister of this guard was a widow, and, full of sympathy and compassion, she listened, Sunday after Sunday, to the history of poor Blanc's disappointment. To listen was in some sort to console, and amongst these three personages, the lover, the dead *fiancée*, and the living confidante, there was at last but one love, and Blanc married the widow. Unhappily, however, he was not cured of his grief; marriage failed to take from him the memory of his lost love; he became more and more absorbed, and his melancholy at last ended in monomania. His reason returned to him, however, with the thunders of the Revolution of 1848. At the sound of the cannon of the Chateau d'Eau, Blanc awoke from his dream,—passed his hand over his forehead, as if the popular tumult had cleared his clouded brain, — took his gun, kissed his wife, rushed out to his duty as a National Guard, and formed one of the escort of a Princess and a mother, who to the last, struggled, with all her might, against the dangers of the *émeute* and the desertion of

her partisans. The tumult and confusion which attended the departure of the royal family from the Palais Bourbon after the regency had been put aside by the people will not, even at this distance of time, have been forgotten. The young Duc de Chartres had been separated from his mother, been recognized in the crowd, seized by the collar, and would, no doubt, have been strangled, if the intervention of a brave, timely arm had not occurred to spare this crime to the Annals of the Revolution. That arm was Blanc's. At the same moment, M. de Girardin and M. de Larochejaquelein were presenting themselves as shields for the Comte de Paris against the fury of an insurgent. I am wrong, however, in saying Blanc was alone in the defence. A dozen loyal and courageous men followed and aided him in his energetic intervention; and two years afterwards, on the 24th of February, the anniversary of the day, they each received from the Duchess of Orléans an emerald pin surrounded by diamonds in the form of 'forget-me-nots.' The gifts were accompanied by a letter, which concluded thus: 'Thanks to you, who protected our weakness.' The revolution ruined the poor tailor; his reason also again left him, never to return. He died mad, ten or twelve years ago; and

his last words were of '48. 'Save the children,' he cried; 'hide the treasure!'"

Blanc left a will, in which he expressed a wish to be buried at Ville d'Avray; but it was found that there was no available spot in the little cemetery. His friends were intending, reluctantly, to apply elsewhere, when, on looking over the cemetery books, it was discovered that a grave which had been granted for ten years had just then become vacant. This grave was the grave of poor Blanc's lost love, and in it he was placed. It is given to every-day life sometimes to enact extraordinary dramas; of which, it seems, even tailors may be the sentimental heroes. May poor Blanc's honest head lie lightly upon his goose!

CHAPTER IX.

A BOHEMIAN PAR EXCELLENCE.

PARIS has produced a very remarkable army of picturesque Bohemians, who have amused, often astonished, and sometimes scandalized, the quiet inhabitants of the great city of pleasure. Henri Murger, Nadar, Alfred Delvaux, Pierre Dupont, and a host of others, have described their revels and their orgies, their practical jokes at *cafés*, and how they often lived, or rather starved, from hand to mouth. They turned their wild oats into golden grain. "Champfleury's Confessions of Sylvius" are revelations made in the very frankest spirit. Paris knows how gay were Antoine Faucher, Hippolyte, Boillot, Guigard, Guichardet, Jean Wallon, and last, and most picturesque of all, Privat D'Anglemont, in their threadbare coats, and with not two halfpence to rattle together in their pockets.

D'Anglemont's history was, as his friend Delvau relates it, wanting neither in interest nor in adventure. Let me take up M. Delvau's colours, and

present the reader with an outline of the Bohemian *par excellence*, whose memory still lingers lovingly with many reformed rakes of his acquaintance. I asked an old *café* frequenter, who, I knew, had gone through all the *cafés* of Bohemia on the Seine, whether he knew poor Privat. My friend had long since reaped his crop of wild oats, and had become a grave ill-paid music master, but at the name of Privat his eyes sparkled and his cheeks flushed with pleasure. "Knew him?" said he, "I should think I did!"

Walking in the streets of Paris you elbow thousands of passers-by to whom you do not pay the least attention. They are probably not worth attention. They are individuals without individuality, medals without effigy, coins without date. These passers-by form the multitude, the mass, the flock. They are born, they live, they die, one knows not how—and one has really no need to know. They are not human creatures—they are shadows. They pass away without ever having existed. And yet, apparently, they are precisely those favoured by an inconsistent Providence. They are the happy, the joyous, the peaceful, the dependants of the law, of life, and of chance! They have wives, children, families, property, shoes,

clothes, and money; and I know not what more! In one word, they enjoy themselves.

But, besides these, pass and repass—sad sometimes, dreamers often, poor always—fine and striking figures, that have a physiognomy, a colour, a relief, an originality, a date, a signification: they are artists, poets, thinkers, searchers, restless vagabonds—enamoured of glory, infatuated with idle fancies, indulgers in dreams. They are the true members of the *Burschenschaft*—they are men!

They are, also, three-quarters of their time, poor and suffering, badly clothed, and with hardly a shoe to their feet—because with them, unlike other people, it is beauty that leads the beast, and not the beast that leads beauty. They may have genius, perhaps; they certainly have talent and wit. They are the chosen of Nature, full of intelligence and of heart. They know how to love, they feel enthusiasm, they have the sense of life, they have a knowledge of good and of evil, of the grand and beautiful!

And the crowd—the ignorant, the half-witted, the Philistines—the crowd covers them with disdain, with injuries, with mud, instead of showering them with flowers, caresses, and bank-notes. The crowd

sees only the worn coat seams! But I know the crowd, and it is a bad knowledge: I know it. Here are eighteen hundred years that you prefer Barabbas the rogue, to the apostle: Jean Hiroux to Jean Journet!

When leaving Athens, Demosthenes turned round, stretched out his hands, and cried, "O Minerva, patroness of this town, why do you take pleasure in three such wicked beasts—the owl, the dragon, and the crowd?"

Demosthenes was right. The crowd is the eternal history of the grasshopper and the ant. The crowd is proud, because it works to be able to give to a poor devil of a horse that toils in the furrows, in the broad sunlight, labouring to bring home provisions that will last through the days of cold and famine.

The ant ignores, I see, that each creature has its work to do, here below; and that those who are proud of being attached to an equipage, or of using a sting, will never, never be attached to any work of the imagination, or manage the pen, the pencil, or the graver. God knows what He has made. He created thee, miserable creature, for the work of thy paws: work! work! work! Come, and go from here, from there; fly,

hills and valleys, in search of corn, of grain, of the fortune that thy rapacious instincts prompt thee to amass! It is thy part, thy function, to treasure up, to monopolize! But never injure the poor singers who come and ask of thee a piece of bread when they are hungry; thou hast the right to refuse them, simply as an animal without heart as thou art; but thou hast not the right to injure and goad them as thou dost, spiritless creature!

Bohemian, you must not be afraid of answering, when you have occasion, this cowardly and miserable lesson of the ant—whether they have paws or nailed shoes, it is all the same—by another lesson that it will probably never understand, alas! You must not be afraid of telling the workmen in fields and in towns—who think so little of art and poetry—this elementary truth, to know, that the work of the brain is quite as sacred as the work of the arm, quite as meritorious, quite as heroic, quite as laborious—when it is not more so—since it produces works which often have the duration of brass. Therefore do not laugh so foolishly, you rustics in wooden shoes and waggoners' dresses, at that pale thin man in coat and shoes who passes your farm so quietly: he is a poet who writes books that will console your wives; he is an artist who paints pictures that your

sons will admire; he is a scholar who searches, and who will find a method to lighten the cares of your life, money-loving creatures that you are. Do not laugh at him, peasants of the towns and of country, and do not refuse him the glass of water, the piece of brown bread he asks of you because he is hungry and thirsty, and has forgotten to economize the necessary sous for his wants to-day and to-morrow. Why should the rogue laugh at the thief, the ass at the horse, the frog at the bee, the blade of grass at the star, the labourer at the poet, the peasant at the singer? All creatures are equal before the Creator, who loves them all equally, and looks at them with an impartial eye. If he did not pity you, how He would hate you—working ants—even as you hate the careless grasshoppers of the future!

The future? The grasshoppers are right in giving no thought to the morrow. They are right to sing. Sing, sing, sing, careless grasshopper! Dance even, as the ant ironically invites thee. Thou wilt always live as long as she—whom the foot of a passenger will crush directly. Thou wilt always live as long as she, and thou wilt have sung, have danced, and laughed, at least, during the short hours of thy short existence. She, the ant, will have amassed—for others!

Alexandre Privat D'Anglemont was one of these despised members of the crowd. By this title—and by others also—I raise him from the oblivion into which it was wished he should fall.

He was born at Sainte-Rose, in the most poetic corner of the most poetic of the Antilles, some forty-three years ago.

His father—but why should we not imitate, on this subject, the discretion of which he gave a proof himself? He who had the right to lift the veil that hid his civil condition, never did so: why should we? Privat had had a father, like all the world, because, as according to Bridoison, one is always somebody's son. He had had a father and a mother, and if he revered the one, he respected also the other. From whomever he came, he felt he was well-born—that sufficed him. After all, it is not the parchment that makes the gentleman. Happy are the first distinguished men of their families, instead of being merely a sprig!

Privat had no name: he made himself one, and, in order to wear it with greater ease, he came to Paris, where he did his good works, having for companions in his studies two sons of the King Louis Philippe.

His studies finished, and his Bachelor's diploma

in his pocket, he thought at first of becoming a doctor. But "art is long, and life is short." Privat soon saw that this profession would not suit him, and gave up the idea.

He was very young then, and did not know whither to direct his activity. The unknown has great seductions for the imagination at twenty: twenty loves to drift away without oar or compass, at the mercy of the water and chance. Privat, careless and adventurous, went whichever way the Parisian wind blew him.

It is thus that he became an author. It were bootless to follow Privat step by step in his literary career. He moved rapidly. He had genius: he spent it on his road with his money, throwing both about him on all sides, and inventing excuses to spread them, when there were none at hand.

Great quantities of his articles were scattered where it is almost impossible to find them. Those which M. Delahays collected were only found after long and laborious searches. There were some in the *Picturesque Magazine*, in the *Corsair*, and in the *Family Magazine*, in the *Paris Gazette*, in *Figaro*, in the *Siècle*, in the *Messenger*, &c., &c., &c. Privat never thought of

collecting them. He worked only with a view to his contemporaries, and not to posterity. Contemporaries are two steps from you; posterity is several thousand miles before you, and it is too far for those who fear long voyages. Privat lived and wrote from hand to mouth. This indifference as regards his works explains itself by Privat's indifference as to where he lived. He lived gaily and carelessly, now rich, now poor, writing where he could, talking more than he wrote, encouraging others, and never discouraging himself. As to interesting himself beyond measure, in that which constitutes our well-being and our happiness, he never thought of it—he was happy in his own way, as the birds are on their boughs. The birds sing: Privat sang, that is to say, talked and wrote. He was never surprised in a complaining humour, never, either, in a mood to speak evil of his fellow-creatures.

Heir to Pierre Gringoire and François Villon, Privat was indefatigable in his walks about Paris —about the old streets that he knew so well. He also, involuntarily or voluntarily, was a vagabond—a Bohemian without a penny—he explored valiantly the under parts of Paris. He was at home with everybody—on the Boulevards, or on the Montagne

Sainte Généviève! He was a useful and observant wanderer, and picked up materials very much like the chiffonniers. He wrote day by day his "Small Trades," and his "Unknown Industries." These will be valuable books of reference for the future historians, who may write the history of Paris during the nineteenth century.

Few people knew Privat, although he was known by all Paris. They would persist in seeing in him only a Bohemian—a man without home—an incorrigible sonnambulist—a literary Wandering Jew. A wanderer he was, and a *farceur;* but he was something more.

It is true that he often slept under the blue, after having supped at the table of chance; but I believe that this may happen sometimes to the most respectable people in the world, and that the warrant of householder is not precisely indispensable in obtaining the esteem of one's fellow-citizens. No one has ever dreamed of reproaching Gérard de Nerval, that he was not a man of property; it was not thought a crime in Diderot, that he did not die a millionaire: why should the world be more severe towards Privat?

Why? No one knows why. The public has certain days of such severity, and when once it

has judged a man, it does not alter its opinion, thinking it, no doubt, infallible.

The public was deceived about Privat, that is all. It was deceived, because it did not know him enough, I repeat, though knowing him very well. It may be that the Parisians do not like people whom they have seen in their capital too long: old faces become disagreeable. The Athenians become weary of hearing Aristides called the Just. The Parisians were weary of hearing Privat incessantly talked of; they were weary also of hearing him talk,—although he had always the same wit and the same heart, the same smile, and the same youthfulness. Privat did not weary because he was, before all, a spectator of life, and that finding it amusing, he always found a new pleasure in seeing it played before him. His schoolfellows of Henry the Fourth's College had become men: Privat had remained a child. To a certain class he became a sort of legendary person, on whose back all sorts of extravagances and follies might be heaped. A great many of those who talked of Privat had never seen him; but they discussed him, endowing him with vices, and boasting of having lent him money —probably because they knew that he had neither the one nor the other.

The newspapers, also, contributed to this scandal about Privat. When a *chroniqueur* wanted a name for a Bohemian, he took that of Privat D'Anglemont, who never claimed it. Where would have been the good to claim it? Must we not allow the course of human malignity to run, as we allow water to run? "Alas! dear, dead friend," cries Privat's biographer, "human malignity, in re-uniting its thousand and one streams, formed a torrent, and all but drowned thee!"

Happily, Privat was an excellent swimmer, and his reputation came out safe and sound from the perils that encompassed it, by the foolishness of others and his own carelessness. All the little clouds that obscured his name in the eyes of the sound portion of the public faded away on the day of his death, before his coffin, which so many of his friends followed—honourable and illustrious friends, wielders of the pen and pencil!

Death came quickly upon him. One cannot descend to the depths of the Parisian abyss with impunity. One cannot explore with impunity the shallow social waters where so many monstrosities swarm. Privat D'Anglemont lived in unknown Paris, and unknown Paris killed him. In spite of his vigorous organization, in spite of the strength of

his nature, which tempted him to bear the heaviest showers, Privat fell a victim to the dangerous habits that he had gradually formed, and that he could not give up. His nights were passed in roaming through the streets of the great city, in search of the impossible, the strange, and the new. He, who walked incessantly, was obliged at last to stop. He, who was as free as a bird, was at last compelled to allow himself to be confined in that sinister cage called the hospital.

Do not think that his gaiety and his genius had abandoned him with his health. Quite the contrary. In spite of illness, in spite of the atmosphere of the hospital, in spite of the cries of the sufferers, in spite of the railing of the dying, he still sang and laughed, this charming literary Bohemian. He brightened the sick and dying by his wit, that shone for the last time.

After having passed a winter at La Charité, he wished to come out, freshened by the odours of spring that came to him from neighbouring gardens. He came out; but only to fall ill again. Death had already marked him for his own, as a man to conquer, an intellect to put out. He was consumptive.

He then entered the Hôpital Lariboisière.

None of his friends ever hoped he would leave it

alive. The news of his death was even brought to his friends one morning by an official of the hospital, who had left him in, as he thought, his dying agonies. But his hour had not quite come: a little struggle more for life, and Privat was gone. His rich Creole organisation fought energetically against the invasions of death, and at times gave hope that it would triumph.

Privat hoped so also, and he formed projects for voyages without end. When we are near the grave we love to touch our cradle. He dreamed of going to Sainte-Rose, on the other side of the Atlantic!

He dreamt so often of it, he wished it so much, that he forced death to loosen its hold for a moment, and one morning left the Hôpital Lariboisière.

Any other man would not have hesitated. He would have profited by this respite accorded him by illness to fly from Paris—the murderous city, and would have gone towards those countries where the sun shines, towards those paradises of the Antilles, from which ungrateful man banishes himself.

But Privat was too Parisian to leave Paris thus. He was not born by the Seine, but he understood that he ought to die there.

He had only left the Hôpital Lariboisière two or three days, when he was obliged to go and knock at

the door of the Dubois Maison de Santé—the hospital for the members of the Society of Men of Letters.

That was his last halt before the great departure. Thanks to the kind attention of the Director, Privat had a room to himself—a room, clean, airy, gay, and as snug as possible. He had never been so well lodged, never been so well cared for. The Bohemian was about to die in the bed of a citizen.

"Dear child, it is finished!" he said to his friend one morning as he entered his room.

He showed a serenity of spirit that proved he was thoroughly aware of his hopeless state.

His friend pressed his hand and let him say his last words.

"All the people here are so good to me," said he. "I should be really so happy, if I did not feel so ill. I have only one fear, that is of dying in the night. At night, alone, without a friend beside me—it is horrible! While in broad sunlight, as at present, with familiar faces and hearts near me, it is good and comforting; one does not seem to be going alone." He stopped, exhausted by the efforts he had made. Then, as he perceived his friend's sadness, he talked cheerfully of all sorts of things; but, although he tried, he could no longer smile.

Memory had not yet abandoned him any more than his heart had. He remembered François Villon, and repeated several pages.

There is a profound melancholy in this last scene of the celebrated Bohemian's life. The mind reverts to the lithe figure of the gay fellow murmuring his song along the Boulevards; wearing his shabbiness with pride; elbowing dull Respectability on the kerb-stone; and wasting the precious hours of youth in follies of every hue. Between the young, the songful, the witty roysterer, whom Paris has laughed at and scorned by turns, and the pale sufferer who is waiting for death under a roof of charity—the wanderer forcibly brought to rest—there is a great distance. The boy from the burning West, whose hot blood has burned out thus early, has stood alone through life, a gallant vagabond. And he is cheerful to the close!

He died as he wished to die—in the broad sunlight, with friends around him.

He had prepared himself for the long journey. He took with him for provision a conscience pure from cowardice or treachery. However, in spite of that, wishing to gird himself before his departure, he asked to be left alone for a moment. He was obeyed.

When his friends re-entered the room, Privat had turned on his side, and——he had lived.

It was the 18th of July, 1859!

So passed away this Bohemian *par excellence*, who had managed to occupy perhaps more than his deserved share of public attention for many years. He was, however, something more than a Bohemian, with a taste for late hours and absinthe, as I shall endeavour to prove.

Privat d'Anglemont, albeit a Bohemian *pur sang*, understood, I think, the Parisian character as developed by high and low, by the bourgeois of the Faubourg St. Honoré, and the *gandin* of the Chaussée d'Antin, and the *lion* of extravagant tailoring, who airs his toothpick behind a hundred and fifty guinea horse. The vanity, the folly, the wit, and what we should call emphatically, the swagger, of the few hundred men of all ages, who, talking, riding, lounging and eating, drinking and playing between Tortoni's and the Bois de Boulogne, make up the Paris that is written about in *Figaro* and described in the romances of the *Librairie Nouvelle*, or the *Librairie Centrale*, were at the finger ends of the Prince of Bohemians. He understood the light side of his love. It was his belief that Paris was the centre of the civilization of the

world; that her example was taken blindfold in all things, and that unfortunate folks born beyond the frontiers of France could resign themselves to their disgrace only by dint of copying with a slavish earnestness the manners and the *mise* of incomparable Lutetia. Her follies, to him, were worth all the greatnesses of London, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg. Her ever-changing *argot;* the rise and fall of her *lions,* who spent their fortunes in two years, not in extravagances natural to youth, but in prodigious follies, for the sole delight of being the wonder of the Boulevards for two seasons; her sensations and manias were the atmosphere in which Privat lived and died; a Bohemian of the Quartier Latin, or of the Café Leblond—a universal, most pliable vagabond!

Poor Privat's contributions to the *Siècle* were spirited reflections of his hasty and errandless career. He tasted the sweets of Paris life, and ground his teeth against its sharp necessities, and laughed all the time, as became a child of Paris, who, by the way, was, as I have shown, a child of St. Rose in the Antilles! His genius and his tastes were Parisian, however. His soul was on the Boulevards or by the Luxembourg. It was his delight to carry the last Paris slang word, or impertinence, or extravagance

about, and bandy it lightly as the wash-leather balls are buffeted under the Tuileries chestnuts. He was of the joyous band who are the delight of romance-writers, and the despair of fathers and uncles. *Ce que c'est que la jeunesse!* the old gentlemen cry, sitting in the straight-laced, severe *café*, under the Palais Royal, whence Camille Desmoulins issued to address the angry mob, and inaugurate the Revolution. *Jeunesse*, it must be confessed, has gone a little mad in Paris. *Jeunesse* reads Dumas the Younger, and *Figaro*, and the "Yellow Dwarf," and is pleased to glance at the free-and-easy morals pictorially developed in the *Journal Amusant*. A very serious gentleman of the old school, who has passed his life doing solid work; a well-informed, high-minded, but not brilliant man, who loves the classics of his country, and has made some sacrifices in an endeavour to spread the knowledge of them among his countrymen, said to me, "It is frightful to contemplate this *jeunesse* of ours: smoking at the cafés; supping at the *Maison Dorée*; driving about the Bois de Boulogne; chaffing, and snapping jewelled fingers at every honourable relation of life; ignorant as a *chiffonnier*—with Shame, in an Indian shawl, on its arm. I look at the noisy, gaudy crowds, laughing along the asphaltum, and

wonder what the next generation will be. What can it be?"

That which is new in Paris is *Le Sport.* Not the sport of the field: the healthy morning on the breezy moor, the manly stride after the deer; no, the sport that is added to the other vices of the Boulevards is the low gambling over horse-flesh which has long been seen at the public-house doors of England. *Jeunesse,* not having vices enough, has taken to betting. The *lions* have taken to keeping studs. The Duc de Morny counts his seventy racers and his English trainer. Whither the Caderousses lead, the little *employés* of the Admiralty or War Office must follow. They who cannot drive in a tandem, follow in a *coupé;* but all go the same route. "We are a race of monkeys," said lively Privat; "we cannot be ourselves; we must imitate our neighbours of the north or of the south, or we must imitate one another." Here follows a bit of profound observation: "Abroad, in England, for instance, a man is esteemed according to his character as a *humorist,* that is, according to his dissimilarity from his companions!" The *mode* is not so easily set in London as it is in Paris; but we are not so completely *humorists* as the French Bohemian paints us. Sport, in other words betting, and an affected knowledge of

horses, is, however, thoroughly established on the Boulevards. The head goose has turned his empty head towards the racecourse, and the flock is following. The *gentlemen riders* are permanent figures in the Paris gallery of exquisites. The fop is learning to make his book. International betting has been fairly set on foot; and the Duc de Morny will not be content until he has won a Derby. The betters of Paris have their regularly appointed agents at our English races. The great betters will have their humble imitators; and now the day is not far distant when the wine-shops will be the head-quarters of sweepstakes. The sporting is decidedly the new aspect of Paris. The race of horses will improve, and the human race will deteriorate. The profligate of Tortoni's, and of the Jockey Club at the corner of the Rue Scribe, has added the odour of the stable to his attractions.

With this new incense about him, let me present the young man of fast Paris life (and there is little save fast life here) as painted by Privat d'Anglemont, who knew him well. I have taken up dozens of books that have appeared lately, and all of them tend to prove that Privat's canvas is not overcharged with colour. One reads one yellow volume after the other, only to be astonished again and again at the people

and things set coolly before the reader for his amusement. Virtue, it would appear, has found a hiding-place at last; and, at two o'clock in the morning, the reckless exquisites in the company of *ces dames* are wishing her *bon voyage!* Privat writes of his beloved Paris: "At the present day people still like to be thought aristocratic, but they much prefer being considered rich. The love of money has destroyed in us all noble ambition; there are only a few madmen who now care to earn a reputation for the love of glory, and they are the mark for the ridicule of all their contemporaries. It is considered absurd to do anything for the sake of honour; honour neither gives us good dinners, good clothes, nor cheap pleasures, nor does it help to keep up appearances. 'To keep up appearances' is the idea of the epoch. You may be a fool, a scoundrel, a wretch without house or home; you may do what you like, steal, murder; what matter? You will still be clever, rich, honest, magnanimous, if you know how to keep up appearances.

"In France, the greatest evil that can befall a man is to be original. Originality almost amounts to insult. The original man has no chance. Endeavour to get a place for him, and the person to whom you apply will answer, 'I should be delighted to

do any service for you within my power. Command me in all things, but don't ask me to help this friend of yours. Why, my dear fellow, he is an *original!*'".

"Young gentleman, who aspire to the honour of sitting eight hours a-day at an office desk, copying letters, and making reports under the eye of an insolent head clerk—if you wish to attain the object of your ambition, station yourself every day at the window, watch every one who passes, notice their dress, their gesture; study people's way of speaking, borrow their favourite expressions, disguise your own tastes, check your imagination, become a mediocrity, and you will at once assure your future position: you will have preserved appearances.

"Look around; is it possible to meet with originality. Every one has the same walk, the same clothes, the same *tournure*—the tailor makes every man alike: why should you be different from your neighbour? All the world is agreed that France is the land of good taste; that our women and our dandies are perfect in the art of dress. But from whom does taste emanate, since those who possess leisure and fortune enough to follow the fashion all dress alike? This year blue is the fashionable colour: all the world is in blue. Coats are

worn short: coats are curtailed as if by enchantment.

"Next year green will be worn; the waist may be unnaturally long; but the majority of Frenchmen will clothe themselves in green, with long waists, utterly regardless as to whether the costume suits—without judgment or reflection. It is the fashion; that is sufficient. It was but last year that the Boulevard was changed into a Hospital for Incurables. A few lively persons, wishing to play the Parisians a practical joke, made their appearance one fine day on the Boulevards dressed in redingotes borrowed from the wardrobe of Bicêtre. They became at once the fashion, and all the tailors were obliged to apply to the clothmakers of the *Assistance Publique* in order to procure the particular kind of cloth required to satisfy the singular taste of these customers.

"It was difficult to say whom this kind of garment became; certainly neither the short and fat, nor the tall and thin. In any case it was hideous; yet everybody aspiring to belong to the aristocracy of taste, was *embicêtré* by this spirit of imitation. It is therefore understood that if you wish to be neither a fool, nor a wit, nor a very young man, nor an original—any of these titles shutting the door in the

face of all careers,—if you would neither think, nor judge, nor reason, nor invent, nor live for yourself: do as the world does; accept the slavery; bow your head to the tyranny, and all will be at once open to you—you will have kept up appearances. In France no one makes a fortune in order to live in ease and comfort, and indulge in tranquil joys,—money is made for the purpose of emulating some other envied person, and to have the appearance of a man who knows how to enjoy his wealth. There is very little reality in this beyond the appearance; the proof is that nearly all rich people are ridiculous and suffer from *ennui.*"

Privat was a good-natured critic, when compared with some of his contemporaries. Let us hope that the rising generation are not so bad as they are painted: and that they can read better things than are to be found in the *Hanneton!* A copy of this journal lies before me. I bought it on the Boulevards. It is openly sold everywhere. It is read in public—and I cannot even describe the grossness of its contents. Yet no voice is raised against it. The public is not scandalized. The censor of the press has nothing to say. He cares not what form vanity takes, provided it is not that of a politician. He is possibly pleased to see *messieurs les journalistes*

airing themselves in the little Boulevards papers—and content, if talked about.

Everybody is panting to be before the world—to be *en evidence*, even for their follies or their vices, or both. Private life is invaded by the critic or *chroniqueur*, without the least hesitation. Eugène Delacroix was turned to account by the gossip-mongers, before his body was laid in the earth. We had a description of his house, of his manner of living, and of his death and appearance after death. His last words made copy in the *Figaro!* We are told that his furniture was in the style of the First Empire; and that his home had a severe aspect. His dying words were a request that his eyes might be closed directly after death. He ordered his body to be embalmed. Had the writer known who was the painter's barber, and how many francs were in the artist's house when he breathed his last, the facts would have been served up for the Boulevard *cafés*.

Here, however, is a point worth keeping. Delacroix exhibited a picture in 1881, entitled 'Liberty guiding the People on the Barricades.' It was at once bought by the Government, and thrust into the lumber-room of the Louvre, where it has remained to this day. This was a subject of great

regret to him, and cured him of politics with the brush.

But the *chroniqueur*, mayhap, is not to blame—when he gathers materials at random, at a man's dinner-table, or by his death-bed. He pleases the public; and, so far as we can see, he pleases the people about whom he gossips. Parisian celebrities are not loth to sit for their portraits in any attitude, provided the portraits are seen. I take up a light paper, intended to be read over a Neapolitan ice, and I am informed that Monselet, Jules Janin, Leo Lespès, and other literary celebrities are *beaux mangeurs!* Hervé also is said to have a very pretty *coup de fourchette*. The author follows up his relations with an exclamation that it was always so, with literary men; as though *suprêmes* were always at the command of authors; and *cordons bleus* were ever the humble servants of the poet!

To return to poor Privat. He wrote, I must confess, occasionally, with small regard to the *biensèances*. His famous History of a Shirt was I believe, considered too "strong" even to be read in wine-shops, in the columns of the *Siècle*; and was published after his death. It has a Rabelaisian humour and richness in it. Privat could be serious as well as gay. The author of Monsieur Poupard

could write a grave review of the Abbé Mullois' "Manual of Charity." He had depth and earnestness in him; but, as Jean Paul put it, "he laid the egg of his act, or deep saying, without any nest, on the naked rock."

CHAPTER X.

LITERARY VIVISECTION.

If a law should issue from the Imperial Government, prohibiting every French writer from peeping into the study, the wardrobe, the *café*, and the accounts of his fellow men of letters, there would be consternation on the Boulevards, from the Chaussée d'Antin to Vachette's. Dinochau's turbulent patrons would turn white with rage; and the more elegant frequenters of the Divan Lepelletier would bite their nails, and cry that at last Liberty was stifled and would rise no more. What would become of the *Figaro?*—the *Journal Amusant* would cease to be amusing,—the *Hanneton* would fly away. The unhappy Parisians would be left uninformed as to the manner in which Alexandre Dumas spent his last napoléon; and when he was likely to borrow once more. Poor Dumas! A long life in a glass house has given his countrymen an opportunity of knowing him by heart from head to foot. He has supplied material to every scandalous pen. His

debts and duns; his little private vanities; his *tendresses* and his quarrels; his family relations and his transactions with his publishers are known to every lounger on the Boulevards. A steady reader of the current literature of the time might make out Dumas' accounts for him, and tell him when he last paid his tailor's bill. He has grown fat: *this* is a matter of contemporary history already. Dumas was at his wit's end for money when he started *Les Mousquetaires;* and he paid nobody—not even his authors. But Dumas is only described every day because he is more celebrated than his companions. It is said that he is on view every afternoon from four till five, at the office of the *Petit Journal,* where he is free to converse with any of the subscribers to the newspaper.

Murger, Privat d'Anglemont, Guichardet, De Musset, and a crowd less celebrated, but still known enough to serve the turn of the insatiable *chroniqueur* from time to time, have been served up in every journal, and with all the sauces of the French literary *cuisine.* A man shall be perpetual secretary to the Institute of France, and he shall not escape censure. Men of science, sculptors, historians may live out of the world, but not out of a *chronique.* Alphonse Karr is followed to the Villa Bermond, near Nice

—whither we, indeed, shall follow him presently. The *chroniqueur* will take an observant fork, and note all that is upon M. Karr's table. Ah! M. Karr thought he would eat that *Mayonnaise* unknown to the world! He reckoned without his *chroniqueur!* Paris knows which claw of the lobster he consumed. M. Karr must not complain, however; since the *chroniqueur* considers the shoulders of a lady at the Opera fair field for his criticism. A private rehearsal of an opera is announced, the *chroniqueur* is admitted, and the world is informed that the Prince and Princess de Metternich were there, with Count Walewski and the Countess de Labédoyère. *Chroniqueur* Mané then respects the privacy of the rehearsal in these words: "Above were Madame Aguado and her sons; on the other side was the Count Baciocchi. The elegant clubs had each its box, as on subscription nights. The Marquis du Hallay was not to be prevented from having his. Madame Lelion was in a box on the right of the audience. In the next box was her daughter, with her pretty light ringlets; the young Princess Poniatowska, the daughter-in-law of the author of the music. Then there was the pretty Marchioness of Casanova, who is not, however, quite so pretty as people hoped she would be at the beginning of the

winter. Opposite, on the first tier, are M. Fould and his family. Not far off was the Marchioness of Las Marismas. Almost at her side, one of M. Baroche's sons." Mané concludes by describing M. de Saint-Georges, one of the authors of the *libretto*, as applauding his own work with "juvenile ardour."

The writer is on his best behaviour when he has to touch ministers or their belongings. He pays compliments, he reports feminine charms, and he informs his readers that ladies who pretend to be *à la mode* are displeased when he passes their white shoulders or golden ringlets, in silence. Civil to these great folk, he makes his fun out of his own brothers. He is never weary of telling his readers M. de Mirecourt's name is simply Jacquot. Grandguillot has supplied innumerable tasteless jests. No better specimen of literary vivisection occurs to me than a passage from Aurélien Scholl's 'Scènes et Mensonges Parisiens.' The scene is the Divan Lepelletier. M. Scholl lays bare his literary brothers:—

"It is eight o'clock; the dominoes are ranged in battle order; the Baron de Gyvés has challenged Busquet. Fagès, the former manager of the old *Mousquétaire*, regards the combatants with an envious eye; he burns to enter into the lists, and

to be matched with an adversary worthy of him. A message is received from M. Félix Mornand, who, called upon to fulfil other duties, sends in his resignation as *dominotier*. Another loss for the Divan! Arnould Frémy, the Labourdonnais of the double-blank, in a few feeling words expresses his regret at the daily and deplorable decline in the number of *dominotiers*. Busquet throws himself into the arms of Fages, and drops a tear. Fages wipes his waistcoat, and asks if it will stain! The billiard-table is occupied by the Marquis de Belloy and André de Goy. The author of the *Tasse à Sorrente* is fond of the translator of Dickens, because their names rhyme. Noise behind the scenes, chairs upset, oaths of the *garçons*, Armand Barthet enters. *Mistron*, gentlemen! At the magic word, twenty persons rise. Vernet, with one bound, jumps over M. Eugène Forcade. Every one rushes to the little *salon* at the left. They take their places; the cards are dealt.

'Les mistroneurs, les mistroneurs,
Les mistroneurs sont réunis

The origin of *mistron* is lost in the darkness of time; but it is a kind of *trente-et-un*, which greatly helps to lead poets to the workhouse. The *mis-*

troneurs, under the direction of Armand Barthet, have taken possession of the left wing of the Divan. Edmond Texier has in vain tried to replace the constitutional *mistrow* by the absolute whist; Julien Lemer alone responded to the appeal, and the *mistroneurs* are still in force. The wall of the left side of the Divan was embellished, the other day, by a variety of inscriptions of the following kind.

In one corner:—

Quand Paul Féval
Est à cheval
On voit Banville
Courir la ville
Et Paul Foucher
Va se coucher.

Further on:—

L'encrier, la plume et l'épée,
Etaient les amis de Pompée.

Then the epitaph on the brothers Goncourt as one individual:—

Edmond et Jules dort ici,
Le caveau froid est sa demeure;
Tous deux est mort à la même heure,
Sa plume est enterrée aussi.
Le trépas est comme une trappe
Qui s'ouvre et ferme tour à tour.
Bien vite, hélas! il nous attrappe,
Quand le cruel sur ses gonds court!

More verses follow; then proverbs, jokes, &c.; at last some lines by Guichardet, which have brought grey hairs to the head of Expilly:—

Expilly
A failli
Vendre un livre
Il n'a tenu qu'à Lévy,
Que cet auteur inouï
Ait gagné de quoi vivre!

Expilly is an upright man, both morally and physically. He is Marseillaise, like the Canebière, and has preserved enough of his native accent to serve him for a certificate of birth. Before enrolling himself in the great literary battalion, Expilly served in the Lancers; he may occasionally be seen, even now, practising his drill in the glass. Disgusted at last with Parisian life, Expilly went to try and tempt Fortune in Brazil. Fortune, however, did not yield, and at present Expilly is writing Brazilian novels, which are very curious and very popular. It is said that he has had the left hand salon of the Divan re-papered at his own expense. *Mistron* still counts him amongst its slaves. Charles Emmanuel is the man who has revolutionized astronomy, and set the planets in a new light. His stature is that of a man, if seen through an

ordinary telescope. He has put an ivory knob to the end of his pencil, that is his cane. When Emmanuel travels he dresses like a child, and pays half-price. Aimé Millet is a dark sculptor with a cold. "My boy, you must come to the Rue de La Rochefoucauld, and see my exhibition! two busts and an Ariadne."—"Are you pleased with them?" is the reply.—"Delighted. That fellow of mine really appears to be living; he absolutely seems to look at you and to hear what you say! One is tempted to offer him a cigar!"—"And Ariadne?"—"Oh! one would like to marry her, simply. But come and see." I did go the next day, O beloved Millet! and think you too modest. I demand Ariadne of you; I offer my hand and fortune, and I know I shall make her happy. When you perceive at night a red light in the street advancing towards you, you at once divine an omnibus, and get out of the way accordingly; but look well before you, for if the light is long instead of round, and rather violet in colour, you must, on the contrary, advance to meet it. It will be the nose of Guichardet, the nose of the last gentleman! Who is Guichardet? An infinite being, whom our pen fails to describe; the friend of Alfred de Musset, the friend of Gérard de Nerval.

Literary men call him "Uncle;" women know him as "Oscar." Where is Guichardet? Everywhere: in Heaven, in Hell, at the Divan, at the Brasserie, at the Halle, and all over the world. Guichardet does not write, he relates, and they write for him. Guichardet may live to be a hundred—he will never be old.

A few more of the great obscure are added to the gallery, and then we are told that they return home half an hour after midnight, to dream of the ace and of the double-six. In this way most of our men of letters spend their evenings. A first night at one of the theatres will hardly draw them out of their shell. M. Scholl is amusing—with his knife. He must be a bold man who starts a literary journal under the eyes of Paris *chroniqueurs*:—

"The Count de Villedeuil was scarcely twenty-two when he allotted to himself the title of editor. His income was between three and four thousand a year, with an uncle into the bargain. One must surely compassionate an existence so thrown away, an ambition so mistaken. With just enough intellect to grasp at everything, and not enough to conquer anything, the Count was born a gentleman, and was the grandson of a minister of a day. Fortune had been prodigal to him, yet the indulgence in wild

follies, unfortunate speculations, and scandalous actions-at-law, has left him nothing of his former splendour but the family tomb in Père-la-Chaise, which is inalienable. It is the punishment of Tantalus. To go from one usurer to the other,—to sell, one by one, his woods and his château,—and to have nothing left to him but a palace for his corpse! Although Villedeuil was but twenty-two when I first saw him, he appeared quite thirty. His long black beard, his indolent and disdainful expression, his carelessly aristocratic manners, were very imposing at first; but it was easy to be seen that he was less at his ease than his visitors, and after hearing him speak, one was inclined to set him down as a child. Villedeuil's dream was to rule Paris; he must do something of everything. He was a shareholder to a large amount in the Théâtre Lyrique; but he aspired to the direction of the Opéra. He wished to buy the *Journal des Débats*. People must talk of him; he must make a noise at any price. Corrupted by this unhealthy age, Villedeuil was wanting neither in intelligence nor talent; but both were utterly destroyed by vanity. The desire of seeing himself in print, and the wish of putting himself forward, made him sign his name to every little thing he wrote, and even to many little things

that other people wrote, since he was openly accused of plagiarism by M. Talbot, Professor of the College of Nantes. On the cover of one of his books was the announcement of 'A new work by M. le Comte de Villedeuil, this man of the world who might be taken for a Benedictine monk.' This was the prodigy, the well of science, the man *à la mode*, the nabob, the Louis the Fourteenth! His study was hung with black, decorated with silver daggers; his *calèche* was orange colour; everywhere luxury and bad taste. His desire was always to astonish; but he scarcely ever gained more than a shrug of the shoulders. MM. Alphonse Karr and De Goncourt having on one occasion been summoned for some infraction of the Press Laws, Villedeuil accompanied them to the *Palais de Justice*. When the usher of the court asked him for his papers, in order that he might be admitted into the proper part of the court, Villedeuil answered angrily, 'I have not been summoned, but I am the guilty person; I am the manager of the paper.' What injustice! he was miserable at the idea that *he* had not been summoned instead. The office of the *Paris* was at the Maison Dorée! Where can one be better than in the bosom of one's family? The contributors to the *Paris* went from the Maison Dorée to Auteuil, where the manager had a country-

house, and gave a great many dinners during the summer. At dessert, the guests generally became affectionate; they made a great many protestations, and were very polite; and Roger de Beauvoir, always agreeable and never behindhand, invited everybody to dinner on fantastic Wednesdays."

But, I must turn from ordinary samples of literary vivisection to draw attention to the latest specimen of the art. The knife is held by the famous M. Nadar; and his subject is the well-known Abbé Moigno. I confess that I look at M. Nadar's knife with considerable indifference; and that I do not shudder when the Abbé shrieks. People who know much about the sometime editor of "*Cosmos*" laugh the loudest.

Nadar issued the first number of an illustrated journal, with the title of *L'Aéronaute*. The *feuilleton* of No. 1 is devoted to a portrait of the critical Abbé, who has been so long in the wake of Paris inventors. The Abbé has fallen foul of the wrathful Nadar, for reasons which appear to be plain, at any rate to the subject of the reverend gentleman's attack. The Abbé's cloth has long given him an impunity of which he has not been slow to avail himself. But his hour has come at last. M. Nadar announces his portrait, and warns him that his

soutane shall no longer protect him. "You took it off to hit me; well, you shall not put it on again till I have had my blow at you." Nadar owns that he is delighted with the opportunity the malevolent Abbé has given him, of having a warm discussion on "aërial automotion." He promises to worry the reverend critic for some time to come. He will cut him to pieces, carefully. And then, I must confess, Nadar with sharpest satire bites in the portrait of his unhandsome opponent. The Abbé's nose is called "roxalanesque." He is described as negligent in his dress; "although," the dissector adds, "people say he makes plenty of money." M. Nadar looks in vain for the saintly side of the Abbé. His tonsure is hidden under a cocked hat. He is a *Lansquenet*—not a priest. "A rough man, this Captain Moigno!" Other people respect the cloth he will persist in putting over his body; but M. Nadar promises that he will drive his teeth through it—and when his teeth meet, he is not easily shaken off. "You shall not see my heels, Abbé!" M. Nadar shouts. The first sitting over the Abbé is is not promising for the future repose of the reverend critic. M. Nadar is only fighting with the common weapon. I know the *café* to which M. Nadar repairs, and what he says there. I have paid

to have his private history and personal appearance presented to me. He winced, I doubt not, while he was being cut at; but I have my three francs worth of his flesh. He must submit to the common lot. There is nothing private in Paris. A gentleman who goes to an evening party, turns his friends into "copy." A private performance! Such an idea is monstrous. Everybody must and does hear everything. I could as easily realize to my mind the private performance of a gale of wind, as a private rehearsal within the fortifications of Paris.

The indefatigable *chroniqueurs* and *chroniqueuses* of Paris fresh nib their pens for the winter campaign. The civilized part of Paris is returning since the pretty Countess de B—— and the graceful Marquise de C—— were seen at the Italian Opera a few nights ago. *Chroniqueur* is at his ease. The shoulders and eyes of the ladies in the boxes are as open to his criticism as the *soprani* on the stage. He will let the Countess know whether he approves of her bonnet; and woe unto the Marquise should she show an inharmonious combination of colours in her toilette! He has used up his friends in the dull season, and now comes the turn of the great world. Not a *café*, nor a *restaurant* has escaped him. It is well known to *café* frequenters,

that the number of pieces of sugar which belong to every cup of coffee is, and long has been, fixed at six. Some audacious proprietors have, from time to time, given seven lumps to attract custom, but the traditional number holds its ground. Leo Lespès, at his wit's end for materials, has dwelt on this custom, and on the effect of the sugar-breaking machine; but there is little or no "meat" left on the *cafés*. The *café* literature of Paris would fill a large bookcase. The bone has been licked by the author of "The Threshold of Tortoni." We know that Mirès' breakfast was served to him at the Café Anglais in five minutes, and that Dr. Véron could not acclimatize himself to this side of the Boulevards on the abolition of the Café de Paris. Paris has become familiar with the whereabouts in the Café Riche of the literary suppers of which Henri Murger was the dominant star. When M. Ratazzi was in Paris, it was his wont to take the iced coffee, for which M. Bouin, of the Café Cardinal, is renowned. Little did the distinguished Italian know that the eye of the Paris *chroniqueur* was upon him. He was much mistaken if he imagined that he could enjoy a mouthful that would not afford "copy" to the pens of the "gallant allies" of his country. When Albéric Second had

his letters addressed to this same *café*, he was providing food for a literary brother; and so was Louis Lurine, when he wrote his numerous articles here. I say the last piece of meat must be torn from the *cafés*, since the *chroniqueur* is now compelled to tell us where he writes about them. Does the reader desire to know where the pretty Countess and graceful Marquise are undergoing the analytical process, for appearance in print? Let him hie to the Café Grosse Tête, opposite the Cardinal,—and, there, between six and seven o'clock in the evening, he will find, on the ground-floor, the *chroniqueur's* table! Around it are grouped Xavier Aubryet, who writes about other people's business for the *Presse*; Gustave Claudin, of the *Moniteur*, Aurélien Scholl, who is charmingly indiscreet in the *Yellow Dwarf*; and, I believe, so long as he could limp about, poor Jules Lecomte. All the *café* world has passed through the hands of these gentlemen, from the wood-merchant taking his *absinthe* at the Café de la Bastille, to the dandy pecking at his grilled turkey-wing in the Café de la Madeleine.

CHAPTER XI.

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE IN PARIS.

THE "divine Williams!" He has become a presence in Paris, albeit it is difficult very often to recognize the inspired English yeoman in his fantastic French costume. The tercentenary of his birth has given occasion to those very self-sufficient and audacious gentlemen—the *chroniqueurs* of Paris—for the display of their little wit, often at the expense of the first of all wits. These gentlemen approach the subject of Shakspere scantily provided with reverence. They are so many infinitely small Voltaires, bound to fill a given number of columns with saucy things, once or twice a week. Shakspere, to them, is an open subject, like the genius of young Dumas. He who can write amusing prattle about *L'Ami des Femmes*, can cut his joke out of Hamlet. There are Shaksperians by the hundred to be found in Paris, who pass with scorn the activities of these literary wasps, and make willing homage to the Bard of Avon, as the Master Poet of the World.

Some of these French Shaksperians have laboured hard to keep the rugged strength of Shakspere's English in a French translation of it. He has learned critics and commentators, and accomplished interpreters of him on the stage. There may be many who love him "not wisely," but it is pleasant to be able to record that the lovers of his genius are increasing marvellously on the banks of the Seine, and that the liberal administration of M. Duruy, Minister of Public Instruction, which encourages the teaching of the English language in the schools of France, will prepare a goodly crop of Frenchmen in the next generation who will be able to read Shakspere in his own "pure well of English." When the *chroniqueurs* tell us that it is the fashion to affect a knowledge of Shakspere, and that hundreds of young sparks pretend to be on the most intimate terms with the "divine Williams," when, in truth, they are hardly on bowing terms, let us accept this affectation as one that is full of promise for the future. The sons, we trust, will have the knowledge their fathers affect.

Now, our English Shakspere commentators and inquirers are, it must be confessed, a timid race, when put in comparison with some French Shaksperian writers. The English make conjectures; but

their bolder neighbours create facts. Your timid biographer surmises that Shakspere may have helped his father in the killing of cattle; and speculates, from the great dramatist's law allusions, on the probability of his having been articled to an attorney.

But see how much more satisfactory the picture is, how much bolder and firmer the lines are, when the mighty author of Monte Christo takes up the pencil. It is a matter of current Paris history, that the illustrious Alexandre writes in his shirt sleeves. He occasionally conveys to us a notion that for passages of extra energy, he tucks the shirt sleeves up. Employed lately (in anticipation of a Tercentenary Banquet, projected among French authors) to give the Parisians a graphic sketch of the life of "our pleasant Willy," he set to work in his firmest manner, calling his sketch "The Anniversary of Williams Shakspere." Having informed his readers that Williams was born on the 23rd of April, 1564, he reminds them that the world had then been without a dramatic author for two thousand and sixty-six years; in other words, since Euripides ceased to write. And then, he falls to, boldly, with his brush. He deals confidently with the Stratford butcher-boy, and promotes him easily to the rank of attorney's clerk. We are given to understand that

Shakspere made but an indifferent clerk, and that his employers advised him to run away to London after the awkward poaching affair, for which he might have been hanged, or sent to the galleys. And so Shakspere, impelled by a love of liberty and domestic discord, stepped forth on his way to the modern Babylon.

It is due to English readers, who love their Shakspere, that M. Dumas' important revelations concerning the great poet, should be frankly and freely communicated to them. See the new facts that crowd the Shaksperian page of the immortal Alexandre of Paris. English biographers of the bard wax poor and pale with their shabby supply of facts. It may be that their renown will be revived—

"When every feather sticks in his own wing."

For the present, how can we resist the bold picturesqueness of Dumas' Shakspere in his boyhood.

"No events of importance occurred in the youth of Shakspere, like those which distinguish the early years of those who are destined to become great. A butcher's boy in his father's shop, young Williams was in the habit of bleeding calves and sheep. They who manufacture false poetry about the cradles of

great men, say, that, after the manner of the priests of old (with whom they desire to liken him), young Shakspere spoke invocations before he bled his calves and sheep; but in order to do this, a certain knowledge of antiquity, of Homer, above all, was necessary. Whereas, neither Homer, nor Eschylus, nor Sophocles, nor Euripides, nor Aristophanes, nor Plautus, nor Virgil, nor Tacitus, nor Juvenal were translated. The only authors he could have known were Herodotus, translated in 1554, Thucydides in 1550, Polybius in 1568, Diodorus of Sicily in 1569, Appian in 1578, and, finally, Plutarch, who was translated, not from the original, but from Amyot's translation. It is true that to these authors already known, we must join Sallust, Cæsar, &c. We do not know that Shakspeare had studied any of these books, except Plutarch, from whom he borrowed three of his masterpieces: Cæsar, Coriolanus, and Antony and Cleopatra. Young Williams was sent to the free-school, where he received a fair education—but we have already seen to what this education led—it led the future author of Othello and Macbeth to the position of a butcher's boy. His father did not see clearly how his son could succeed in his own business; so he presently articled him as clerk to an attorney. But young Williams did not take kindly

to stamped paper—we presume that stamps were invented at the time. He retained, from his original trade of butcher, a taste for sporting; and when he was not at his master's office, he was with hawks and dogs. Old John Shakspere, seeing his son's sporting propensities, thought that if he had a home of his own he would abandon hawks and dogs, and take to the duties of bringing up a family. Consequently, probably abusing his paternal authority, he married the lad, at the age of seventeen, to Anne Hathaway, the daughter of a small farmer in the neighbourhood, and who was seven years older than her bridegroom. The union was not a happy one, although its first-fruits were twins—Amlett and Judith—who are inscribed in the parish books of Stratford-upon-Avon, on the 2nd of February, 1584. The young husband, it will be seen, was not twenty. Now this inscription settles a literary question. The name of Amlett, given to the male of the twins, was not common enough in England to allow us to believe that accident gave it to the new-born babe. No; this name shows us that Williams Shakspere had probably in his head the idea, if not the plan, of his first Hamlet; for it is known now, thanks to the fine work of François Hugo on Shakspere, that there were two Hamlets—the first, which was played

towards the end of 1584, or at the beginning of 1585, and the other about 1589.

"Now, how did the idea of this piece, which was one of Shakspere's masterpieces, and which will be eternally the masterpiece of the modern stage, come to the young Williams in the midst of his studies with his attorney, and of his aspirations for sport. In England in 1580, when Shakspere was sixteen, at the period when the feudal laws of the middle ages were hardly abolished, the son of a poor butcher could not be a sportsman—he could be only a poacher. Williams Shakspere was, then, a mere poacher. In his poaching expeditions our young poet was compelled to lie for hours together upon his stomach, or perched up a tree, or lost, like the Pretender, among the branches of an oak. He who writes these lines, if he has not become a poet of Shakspere's proportions, does not hesitate to affirm that to whatever degree the author of Hamlet nurtured his love of the chase, he, the author of Henri III., has loved it as devotedly. He knows, then, by experience, what are the dreams of a poet who is waiting for a buck or a boar on a fine May or September night, lying flat upon his stomach in the high grass, or perched in the branches of an oak; and to what ideal heights, solitude, darkness,

the rustling of the leaves, and the thousand whisperings of the night, can carry the imagination of a dreamer."

The author of Hamlet and the author of Henri III. are presented to us, by the condescension of the latter, arm-in-arm!

Well, Shakspere arrived in London, found Burbage; held horses outside the theatre, and was presently promoted to the dignities and emoluments of candle-snuffer within the theatre. The poor fellow, who agreed to snuff the candles, soon requested an interview with Burbage. This being granted, the trembling underling pulled a manuscript out of his pocket, and read the first scenes of Hamlet to the manager; at the same time Williams requested and obtained the favour of being permitted to play the ghost. Hamlet produced an immense sensation in London. M. Alexandre Dumas declines to believe that during the five or six years following the production of Hamlet, Shakspere did nothing more than retouch and perfect it. "A man is not content to rest," says the immortal Alexandre, "after a success like that." M. Dumas forgets that it is not given to every man to be able to take his coat off, and cover endless rouleaux with writing. According to Shakspere's new biographer, the poet's life was one

uninterrupted series of disappointments; we English in our pride have endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to describe his earthly pilgrimage as an incessant progress of triumph to the capitol. Our love of royalty, it appears, has led us to pretend most unwarrantably, that Shakspere was kindly protected by Queen Elizabeth. The poet praised the virgin queen, who never had any but a deaf ear for him. He died poor, deserted, and despised.

"Let not England, then," says M. Dumas, "ungrateful *par excellence*, boast of having had that pride in her great men which so many nations, particularly the French, have been accused of lacking. England, for two centuries, forgot the name of her greatest poet; of one of the three men who, with Homer and Dante, are the glory of humanity: she allowed the mulberry tree which he planted to droop, and the house in which he died, to tumble: and if she has preserved the house in which he was born, it is because it was too humble to be the object of speculation.

"As to France, she does not forget, she is contented to misunderstand Shakspere. Corneille, Rotron, Molière, Racine, his contemporaries, completely ignored him; and sought their inspiration from Greece, Rome, or Spain. Voltaire, after a visit to England, during which he learned the language,

was the first to read Shakspere: he brought with him from London, Semiramis copied from Hamlet, and Orosmane, an imitation of Othello. How did the plagiarist afterwards express his gratitude to him whom he had robbed and pillaged? He called him a drunken clown; a dung-heap in which you might by chance find a pearl. He finally calls him Gilles Shakspere, instead of Will. Shakspere.

"The great actor Garrick, searching amongst the *detritus* of ages, discovered therein Shakspere; and like the Roman labourers Virgil speaks of, astonished at the size of the skeleton, he measured the bones, and, thanks be to him, placed the giant not only on his pedestal, but on his feet, to astonish the world, and frighten contemporary authors.

"Since then the name of Shakspere has grown in England, France, Germany, and even in Italy; the country least sympathetic, and whose language is most antagonistic, to his genius. The anniversary of his birth has become, like that of Jesus and Mahomet, a new era, that of art; and as Christians date from the year of Christ, and Mahometans from the year of Hegira, so there will come a time when dramatic authors, leaving the ancient world to Eschylus and Sophocles, will date the modern one from the YEAR of SHAKSPERE, that is to say from

1564, the year which had the honour of giving birth to the man who, after God, has been the most prolific creator."

This is what is called strong writing in M. Dumas' most popular manner. Having completed the poet's life, the tercentenary anniversary of his birth is approached with a loud braying of trumpets. This is a great century in which we live. It has produced Napoleon, Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël, Victor Hugo, steam, the electric telegraph, and rifle cannon. But it is great also because it is an era of justice and of appreciation. This century has placed a wreath on every glorious head. France, of course, has had a very great share in this noble work; she has not only classed and rewarded her own great men with generous impartiality, but she has sent inquiries into foreign lands, provided with patents for posterity, and charged with the duty of finding out foreign greatness; old prejudices have been wiped away to make a place for Nelson near Jean Bart, for Byron near Lamartine, for Göthe near Hugo, for Humboldt near Cuvier, for Walter Scott near Molière, for Alfieri near Casimir de la Vigne, for Macaulay near Michelet, for Dickens near Madame Sand. Shakspere must go with the emperors—with Napoleon the emperor of the political world.

Shakspere is related to Homer and to Dante, as Napoleon is related to Charlemagne and to Cæsar. The echoes of the hymns of praise lately sung by Germany at the tomb of Schiller, called to the memory of Englishmen that they also had a forgotten tomb; and forthwith colossal manifestations arose in nearly all the cities of England.

According to our great Alexandre of Paris, the nineteenth century was ashamed of the opprobrium which the eighteenth had cast upon Shakspere. The year 1864 forgot the year 1815: the free-trade convention covered the treaties of Vienna. Men belonging to all the liberal professions decided that a *fête* in honour of the birthday of Shakspere should be held for the first time in France, a committee was appointed, and then a sub-committee agreed to wait upon three French princes of literature, at their respective hotels. M. Dumas does not leave the world in ignorance of the way in which this sub-committee was received. They went first to M. Villemain, who sent them to M. Guizot. This gentleman would not assist at the French banquet, as he had not assisted at the English banquets. But M. Dumas will not leave the historian without hanging an anecdote upon him. M. Dumas once conducted the celebrated

English *tragédienne*, Miss Smithson, into M. Guizot's presence. The lady was nervous because she could not freely speak French; but Dumas re-assured her with the intelligence that M. Guizot was the translator of Shakspere, and must know English. But when they reached the illustrious gentleman, he at once confessed he did not understand English. From Guizot the sub-committee repaired to the residence of Lamartine. Lamartine, with tears in his eyes, excused himself: he was shrouded under a double mourning.

The trouble of the sub-committee and of the committee-in-chief was thrown away.. M. Boittelle, Prefect of Police, whispered a word in the ear of the director of the Grand Hotel. The banquet was a plot—a pretext for a political demonstration. An empty chair was to be placed at the head of the table for the spirit of Victor Hugo. A *farceur* had declared that the republic was to be proclaimed over the dessert! So neither the banquet in honour of Shakspere, nor the Shaksperian dramatic performance, would be permitted. The English banquet remained. It had no political complexion whatever. It was to include the British Ambassador and the American Minister. The leading English residents had rallied round Lord

Grey. About seventy Shaksperians were mustered for the 23rd. But the English counted without M. Boittelle. On the 20th, a commissary of police called on the Grand Hotel manager, and informed him that Lords Cowley and Grey, the American minister, and their friends, would not be permitted to dine together on the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakspere's birth. Yet the *Constitutionnel*—the semi-official journal of the Second Empire—afterwards ventured to assert that the English Shaksperian banquet was not interfered with by the authorities! It becomes interesting to know the reason why we English abandoned our dinner. It was on the 20th, I am able to state most positively, that a police officer called at the Grand Hotel, and forbade the holding of the banquet. On the following day, a remonstrance was addressed to M. Boittelle, who thereupon called on the British ambassador, and said that the British subjects might dine together, but that there must be no Frenchmen with them. The prefect required a letter, moreover, from Lord Grey, as president of the banquet; in which his lordship should guarantee that the banquet would be purely English. This condition, on which the police prohibition would be withdrawn by the prefect, was

communicated to the Paris Shakspere Committee, at noon, on the 22nd. They had already, immediately on receipt of the police prohibition, informed the English residents that the banquet would not be allowed to take place; and now, on the eve of the anniversary, they were informed that on receipt of a guarantee of good conduct from their president, the banquet would be permitted to go on. In the list of gentlemen who were to have dined, under the presidency of Lord Grey, the names of some eight or nine Frenchmen were to be found. None of these were political names, and some of them were those of professors of imperialist sympathies. It is almost superfluous, I trust, to add that the English committee, declining to dine without these gentlemen, declining also to ask Lord Grey to address the required letter to the prefect of police, took no steps whatever to have the police prohibition, which had been left at the Grand Hotel, removed. The committee broke up at two o'clock on Friday the 22nd. It was afterwards discovered that late in the afternoon of the same day, the hotel manager having been summoned to the prefecture of police, had been informed that the prohibition laid on the English banquet was withdrawn unconditionally. But the guests had already been

dispersed; the invitations had been already withdrawn; the committee had separated; in short, the ban of the police was taken off the English banquet, when it must have been obvious to the police authorities that it could not take place.

The French Shaksperians, robbed of their banquet, and of the pleasure of seeing Shakspere's Hamlet, as translated by Alexandre Dumas, revenged themselves by giving the widest possible publicity to the address of M. Victor Hugo, that was to have been read over the dinner-table. I am afraid that the sounding phrases in which the sincere Shaksperian Hugo proclaims the cessation of old enmities and rivalries between England and France at the shrine of Shakspere, will not find a universal echo.

Eugene Chavette was put forward in the *Figaro*, that appeared on the great anniversary, to set his countrymen right on the merits of Shakspere, and the sincerity of his French admirers. He goes boldly to work. He insists that in that hypocritical crowd, where every man shows the white of his eyes at the name of Shakspere, not twenty can speak English.

Twenty!

He is too liberal! According to him, there is

only one individual in France who can speak English well, namely, M. Edward of the *Nation*, who translates Miss Braddon's novels at the rate of sixpence per page — M. Bernard Derosue fathering these translations. But after 1830, people got tired of worshipping Voltaire, and, just at the right moment, appeared a wag who invented Shakspere. Crowds gathered round him, and it was agreed that Shakspere should be admired without being known. The Shaksperian religion was created. Shakspere's French apostles, knowing nothing of their master, were provided with a short stock of nicknames and quotations. They called him familiarly "Old Will," and were bound to repeat "To be, or not to be," as though they were eating honey.

"Poor Shakspere!" cries M. Chavette. "He was an honest man (a little cold, perhaps, towards his wife); but, I repeat, an honest man—more poacher than democrat. I am quite certain, that if he had thought for one moment we should be pestered with his figure, three hundred years after his death; he would have suppressed eight-tenths of his works. Cannot we do justice to Shakspere without tearing our hair in admiration, at the mere mention of this writer's name? The passion and the genius that shine, in spite of the total absence

of common sense, in the ten admirable pieces arranged by Garrick; should these force us to admit the twenty other absurd pieces, for which it is sought to compel our complete enthusiasm?"

M. Chavette is quite certain that we English are laughing at the fuss that is being made about the bard of Avon—"*ce mauvais petit mort de* 300 *ans*." And Paris Shaksperians are, to the mind of the *Figaro* writer, only so many advertising agents for Victor Hugo's new book! When a certain *chroniqueur* was told that the police had stopped the British banquet, he replied, "All the worse for Shakspere." It was painful, indeed, for an Englishman to skim the Paris journals that appeared on or about the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakspere's birth. One narrow-minded, sour critic rejoiced that the English poet's birth had not been celebrated in France, and suggested that Frenchmen should wait for a centenary of his death, to rejoice! Here is a distance marked boldly between a Hugo and a Fournier. Take Assolant again; his sneers are more galling than Hugo's misconceptions. M. Hugo is a thinker, a poet, a power. We grieve when he tells the world that England has not been a true lover of the first poet; but we do not despise him for his error. When an Assolant, cased in

impenetrable ignorance, talks to Europe of Shakspere, and of us, we are moved to wrath indeed! As when M. Chavette makes his little points, be it added, that this magnificent gentleman is not too proud to translate from the English without acknowledgment. The reader will guess at once the origin of *Une orage dans une alcove*.

While France follows writers who write with confidence about a country many of them have not visited, and the language of which they do not understand; while there are men to be found in Paris salons, who have never heard of Shakspere's name, and who sincerely believe that the perfidious sons of Albion have no native composers and no native artists; what hope can we have that the present generation of Frenchmen will do us the honour of understanding us, or our Shakspere? Mark the vanity of the few who *do* pretend to see the majesty of the bard of Avon. They must be his discoverers. They must pose themselves as his discoverers. He is new to them—therefore he is new to the world. They came among us savage and eccentric islanders a few years ago and found a rough jewel that we had been tossing from one obscure corner to another, totally unconscious of its worth. They took it up, and examined it. MM. Hugo and

Dumas adjusted their spectacles, and agreed that the lump was a most precious stone. And forthwith they proclaimed the fact to the world: and the savage islanders gathered about the discoverers, and rubbed their hands, and dressed their feathers for a national holiday. What, in truth, was Hamlet, until it had gone through the hands of the author of "Monte Christo." Who troubled themselves about "*ce mauvais petit mort de* 300 *ans?*" Did Wordsworth, when he wrote—

> "We must be free *or* die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakspeare spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held"?

CHAPTER XII.

PARIS IN A DREAM.

A PARISIAN—to the Boulevards born—who should leave his favourite walk between the Chaussée d'Antin and the Faubourg Montmartre far behind him during ten long years, would find more changes on his return than have been dreamt of in the philosophy of M. Jacques Fabien. M. Hausmann, Prefect of the Seine, has wonders infinitely more startling in the portfolios of the Hôtel de Ville than any which appeared to M. Fabien's traveller in his dream. The broad Boulevards, that have broken through the Quartier St. Antoine and the Pays Latin; the Hôtel Clûny planted in a dainty garden; the Tour St. Jacques, with chattering *bonnes* seated by neat *parterres* at its basement; the Bois de Boulogne, with its velvet sward, its artificial lake and cataracts, and its boats floating to the sound of music, and gay with lanterns of many colours; the finished Louvre, and the levelled space of the Carrousel; and, lastly, Imperial Bonaparte

showing his bare legs from the top of the Vendôme column (where "the little corporal" in the cocked hat had so long delighted the *badauds*), would give the Parisian who left Paris sometime after the house of Orleans had gone beyond the frontiers, a few strange sensations. M. Fabien dreams nothing half so wonderful as the traveller who has not seen Paris for a few years, will now see with his eyes open. The author dreams of a perfect Paris, with all kinds of good things done for the greatest happiness of the greatest number: cheap workmen's omnibuses, moral almanacks, and building societies. Some of his propositions, or dreamings, are fanciful, and do credit to his taste and heart; others only show us how much behind the reality of a Londoner's experience is the Utopia of a Parisian.

In a dream the author walks with a companion, and has the following bit of experience of a perfect Paris:—

Nine o'clock struck; and hunger came with it: I proposed to my companion to pursue our popular investigations while breakfasting. A kind of restaurant was apparent just at that moment—if we may so call the simple eating-houses which are spread over the colony. The servants, the knives and forks, and the linen were of exquisite cleanliness: we seated ourselves and continued our talk. "It must not be imagined that the *cité* which we are visiting is the only one of its kind. There are many others around Paris, but this is the most complete. Do not think, either, that every kind of help and aid for the masses is centred here: it is not so. What you see

here, you may behold grouped around the mairie of each *arrondissement*. Paris is full of prerogatives for the people. There does not exist, that I am aware of, one single public establishment which is not its tributary. In all the theatres, without exception, there are places reserved for the people; clean, convenient places, and at modèrate prices. The people, as a rule, represent one-fourth of the audience. It is forbidden to let the places in advance, and the crowds patiently await the opening of the doors under lighted and sheltered galleries. They no longer take their ticket and a cold at the same moment. For all national, political, and scientific ceremonies, their seats await them; nothing is complete without them. As may be imagined, however, they find it necessary to look about them, if they would not be pushed out of their rights by unceremonious officials. In railways, their carriages make up for want of luxury by exquisite cleanliness. They have feet-warmers in January, blinds in July, and cushions always. The prices are moderate, and, another good thing, on the suburban lines the prices are lower on Sundays and fete-days. It is a happy and moral innovation, which enables the artisan to enjoy his holiday in fresh air, and in the company of his wife and children. In all the government works, and throughout Paris, Sunday is a day of rest for the workman—the veritable seventh day of Genesis. Still, if he has answered to his call every day during the week, he receives his salary for the seventh day. And this is but just, for it would be a farce to give him a day's rest without a day's nourishment. To the glory of the Parisians be it said, this example has spread as rapidly as that of the midwives. In great establishments, in manufactories, in large and small shops, everywhere the Christian precept is welcomed on the fête-day, the workshop is quiet, the shutters are shut. It must, however, be confessed that this result has not been arrived at without difficulty. Many shopkeepers were rebellious, and only yielded after long struggles. But Sunday is at last victorious. Monday is put to flight. What Paris wills God wills."

The author is a great, or, rather, a warm advocate for the employment of women. But he is most amusing, and indeed most suggestive, where he deals with all kinds of improvements that he believes would conduce to the comfort and elevation of the working classes of Paris. There are one or two attractive points in his picture of a model industrial hive. The following extract may give our Aldermen Waterlows some good hints:—

Between the Place du Trône and the Citadel of Vincennes lies a pretty hamlet, spreading itself right and left of the road. It is just opened; yet it wears an air of domesticity, and is as busy as a hive of bees. It is called the Colonie Ouvrière de Saint Antoine. The fronts of the houses—I was about to say the faces—look lively and varied, yet with a certain family resemblance. On the ground-floor are modest little shops, and on the other stories are lodgings for workmen, consisting of an entry, two rooms with fire-places, and a small kitchen with an oven. In the yard, which is open, airy, and common to all, there is abundance of water. The Vincennes road divides the *colonie* into two parts. In the centre of one is a square, with shady walks, and a piece of ornamental water. In the four interior angles are groups representing the figures of Frenchmen whose names are dear to the people as belonging to friends of the unfortunate. In one corner Parmentier, with a smiling face, is showing to some peasants a potato which he has just pulled up: others are lying at his feet. The men are bending down, and alternately admire the earth and the happy agriculturist. In another group, Jacquard is watching the trial of his new loom by a Lyons workman, a young apprentice standing by the while. The third corner displays Saint Vincent de Paul lifting from the ground a poor little naked abandoned child, who spreads out its arms to him.

An aged servant holds her apron to receive the infant. The subject of the fourth group is the Abbé de l'Epée conversing, on his fingers, with a deaf and dumb workman. "This square," said my companion, "is more particularly frequented by the men of the *colonie*. The centre serves as a place of exercise for youths, who go there to practise gymnastics, shooting, archery, rackets and other games necessary to the development of their strength and vigour. The charges are almost nominal, for in this way the rudiments of the soldier's education are voluntarily learnt. The four large buildings forming the square are portioned out as follows. First, a theatre, built in a very simple style. The seats are cheap, and the pieces represented moral and patriotic. ' Occasionally, also, it is used for concerts and popular ceremonies. Then there is a covered market, in which the necessaries of life are sold at reduced prices. Inside are large storehouses for provisions. The third portion of the building is devoted to the medical wants of the colony. Here are to be found Sisters of Charity, who are devoted solely to the necessitous. There is, also, a depot for drugs and medicines in this building, which thus gives help to the sick, the wounded, women in childbirth, and mothers nursing. In the fourth edifice several useful institutions are united. There is a pawnbroker's, where interest on money advanced never on any pretence rises beyond three per cent. There is a good library, well filled and well warmed, for the daily and evening reception of readers, who are also permitted to borrow professional or amusing books. Everywhere there are classes and means of improvement for those requiring them." "Before we go any farther, tell me by what *true* this line of industry has sprung up?" "The *true* is simply an extension of the law of expropriation for the public good. By this law, in one week, the vast ground necessary to this institution was expropriated. Then they lay down the plan of what you call this 'hive of industry,' as they would lay out an English garden. The town of Paris has taken for its share the ground for the streets, squares, gardens, and public establishments. The remainder was honestly put up to

auction at a low price and in small lots; the only condition being that the houses should be built within a year, and uniform externally and internally. The sale just covered the purchase-money, and no more: but this was foreseen. People do not speculate when they are doing good." I supposed "there was a maximum rent for each dwelling?" "Not at all. The disposition of the rooms, the general physiognomy of the neighbourhood, and the object with which the buildings had been erected, draw hither only working men. It has been a great success, no doubt; but *succès oblige*, and it was necessary to provision the colony cheaply. This was how the town of Paris managed. There were species of hanging lofts constructed in the market, and in these are stored mountains of provisions which are collected from the best places, bought when they are to be had cheapest, and paid for with ready money. There is flour; there are potatoes; vegetables, fresh and dried; butter, eggs, cheese, salt, and preserved fruit. The flour is sold to the bakers of the colony, and the surplus to the market salesmen at cost price, sometimes under; but with this restriction, that it must always be sold at a fixed price. I must tell you that a recent decree has lowered the price of food, while forbidding it at the same time to be swallowed up by the manufacturers."

Of such dreams M. Jacques Fabien's amusing volume is made.

CHAPTER XIII.

A TRIP WITH GUSTAVE DORÉ.

It was in the summer of 1855 that a young artist, then almost a boy, travelled with me to Boulogne to be present at the disembarkation of the Queen of England, on her way to visit the Emperor and Empress at St. Cloud. He was delighted with his holiday, and the companions of his journey will long remember him taking his coat off on the sands and rolling about like a young scholar just let out of school. Nor will these same companions forget how the boy artist spent the evening, covering broad sheets of paper with portraits, caricatures, and fanciful sketches of scenery; all dashed off by the bold strokes of what appeared to be the most audacious of pencils. The lightning rapidity with which he sketched in a little book, hardly larger than his thumb; broad effects and masses of troops and shipping, and crowds of country folk thronging every spot where a glimpse might be caught of the Queen of the Isles; astonished even the old pictorial corre-

spondents of illustrated papers who saw the bright-eyed young artist at his work. I have seen an effect by Landseer, made with the snuff of a candle; I have marked Etty rounding a dimple with his thumb —the late J. W. Allen was proud of the skill (and it was remarkable) with which he could thumb in his aërial perspective; but for that force, which is exquisite in the perfect ease that is shown in its use, no sketcher with pen or pencil has ever surpassed the light-hearted, free-handed artist who carried away faithful records of a Royal landing in his waistcoat-pocket.

Gustave Doré was, in 1855, already known to the public of Paris, not merely as a vigorous caricaturist, nor as a facile and inventive illustrator, for he had already produced his edition of "Rabelais." "Rabelais" was exactly suited to the quaint, the unctuous, and, at times, the grim humour of Gustave Doré. His pencil revelled in its rich subject. He startled his countrymen with the fertility, the brightness, and the daring of his inventive faculty. He was squibbed and ridiculed by dull plodders of the classical school. His paintings (and Doré's works in oil, which he jealously keeps to himself, must be known before his place in the art of his country is finally settled) were maltreated. But the

public, who saw his rapidly and boldly executed drawings day after day scattered through all the periodical literature of the time, compensated him for his ungenerous treatment by the schools. The wood blocks he has covered would fill rooms; the lithographic stones he has used would build him a house. The rapidity with which he executes a drawing, is only equalled by that with which he can study Nature. Doré's love of his art is too deep and earnest to allow him to deal with his genius at the risk of impoverishing it. He casts himself into the forest, takes his knapsack and his staff, and treads the high road, pushes his way into odd old cities, and marks down every happy break of a line he finds there. So he is constantly replenishing his store.

And now let me mark how steadily he has progressed in the executive part of his art. His first important work after "Rabelais" was his "Wandering Jew"—a series of large drawings on wood. His mastery of light and shade, his power to produce weird effects of cavernous gloom and blinding light; his manner of hinting a horror, and his courage in putting a ghastly reality close up to the eye of the spectator; were made manifest in his interpretation of the legend of the "Wandering Jew." There was abso-

lute grandeur in some of the scenes where the bearded Jew trod the waters; and, again, where the massed and tumbled clouds took awful shapes, with the light of the cross shimmering over all! The defect that was apparent in these bold original conceptions, was a coarseness in the pencilling, and often an exaggeration in the contortions of the figures. Here and there, also, the ideas were coarse, as in the grave-scene.

Dante's "Inferno," which M. Doré put forth in 1862, showed that in the interim the artist had studied hard and conscientiously. His pencil had lost none of its force, and it had gained much grace. The very first plate, where Dante is lost in the dark forest, discovered the advance the artist had made. The tangled forest is exquisitely drawn. The gnarled roots of the trees starting from the broken ground; the rich undergrowth barring the way on all sides; the umbrageous boughs of the lofty trees dipping to meet the shrubs under them, and keeping the whole scene in a deep green, moist shade—are all given with exquisite fidelity to nature. The studies of scenery of every description—the wilderness of tumbled rock, the giddy height, the fathomless abyss, the flat and dreary tableland, the dread river of Acheron where Minos sits, or where the infernal

hurricane sweeps myriads through the awful gloom—were subjects most welcome to Doré.

In the year 1863 the artist broke new ground with his illustrations to Chateaubriand's "Atala." The sunny landscapes which abound in this work are beautiful studies of light and shade. The Indians are very savages, and look as wild as the wildernesses in which they are framed. But it is in M. Doré's latest work;—in his marvellous series of illustrations to "Don Quixote," that he is to be seen at his best.

The infinite variety of incident, the rich scenery, the quaint costumes, the numerous adventures included in the immortal story of the Knight of the Doleful Countenance, afforded a rare field for an artist's imagination to wander in. M. Doré did not approach his task without due preparation. He spent two years in Spain, studying to get the necessary *couleur locale*. At every page of the really great work he has produced, we have evidences of this study. The head and tail pieces abound with most charming glimpses of Spanish village life, while the great plates are powerful studies of the broad aspects of Spanish scenery. M. Doré is apt to repeat his effects, and this is a weakness against which he should jealously guard himself. His Don

Quixote, for instance, setting out on his journey, is backed by bold masses of tumbled clouds, that are thrown into shapes of fighting men and kneeling knights. This peopling of the clouds is too often repeated in M. Doré's works; but we must hasten to forgive this repetition, when we have so rare and rich a feast before us. M. Doré's studies of the lean knight are masterly conceptions. Where he stands in the moonlight, leaning on his spear and contemplating the heavens, he looks every inch the wild, chivalrous gentleman; albeit he is pacing a farmyard, and the chickens are roosting peaceably at his elbow. There is exquisite humour in the light sketches where the knight is in disgrace; and where he is riding, propped up on Sancho Panza's mule. The second setting forth of the knight is given in a village sketch that is fresh as daybreak. The knight, his arm affectionately placed on the squat shoulders of Sancho Panza, and unconscious of the housewife, surrounded with her ragged offspring, who is cutting up vegetables for the soup; and of the lean turkeys and chickens that are crowing and cackling about; harangues his faithful follower. Sancho looks wonderingly up into the solemn and sad face of Don Quixote. The knight and his servitor sallying forth at a brisk pace in the haze of early sunlight,

is an aërial effect most cunningly wrought. The two plates in which the windmill adventure is related, are as remarkable for bold conception as they are for vigorous execution. The dormouse sleeps no sounder in the winter. The tail-piece to the tenth chapter is a few strokes of the pencil, in which the knight and Sancho Panza are shown asleep 'mid the trees. You can see that a cannon would not wake the exhausted adventurers. The famous couple, in a shady wood, both on their stomachs at the edge of the stream, and drinking from the rippling waters, is a study full of humour. In another free sketch, brimming with humour, Sancho Panza is gazing anxiously into the mouth of the recumbent knight. The adventure with the water-mill is told in a happy bit of landscape painting. The sketches of quaint old streets, the groups of ragged Spanish urchins, the rocklands, and the forest, are all admirable studies from nature. The interiors of old Spanish houses are full of rich and rare detail. Some of the eastern effects of sunlight are worthy of Decamps. The sea pieces include some exquisite effects of haze, and water, and cloud. There are some studies of plump priests that must have been made in the heart of the Peninsula. Don Quixote's entry into Barcelona is a great scene, in which M. Doré shows how he

can manage a Spanish mob. Sancho Panza at home, with his nearly naked children among the pigs and poultry, is a study brought fresh from M. Doré's travels in Spain.

In short, to travel once again with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, in the company of Gustave Doré, is to enjoy an intimacy with the knight we never knew before. The noble sadness of his countenance is impressed upon our memory, and the jolly face of Sancho is perpetual sunshine to us. We follow them both to the end of their adventures with a new pleasure, escorted by the rich and rare genius of the artist; and never leave them until they are safely returned home, and Don Quixote lies on his deathbed, with Sancho Panza weeping at his side.

M. Doré's drawings are beautifully engraved by H. Pisan. The work is, in short, a gift for a king's daughter. It is one of the gems of our salon —a never failing treasury of amusement in our home.

CHAPTER XIV.

OLD THEATRE TIMES.

M. JOUSLIN DE LASALLE was once the manager of the Comédie Française. In his time he picked up great quantities of gossip, both before and behind the curtain—gossip that included known as well as unknown names. That which described in his lively way the last *habitué* of the stalls was full of interest, and ran something after this fashion :—

You might have noticed in the second row of the orchestra stalls to the right, and always in the same place, a little old man, with regular features and powdered hair. The eyes were full of expression and vivacity, and his observant manner harmonized well with his keen and caustic intelligence. This little old man was the Marquis de——, *bel esprit*, and one of the last *gentilhommes* of the eighteenth century. On terms of intimacy with Voltaire, and himself a poet, he had been one of the *habitués* of the Café Procope ;—that *café* which was a kind of Parisian newspaper, and in which judgments were formed on

the theatres and literature of the day. He had known Cagliostro, the celebrated prestidigitator, who was at that time the wonder of all Europe; he had attended the lectures of the German doctor, Mesmer, the discoverer of animal magnetism. The Marquis also remembered that singular person the Count de Saint-Germain, who was so prodigal of his gold and diamonds, though no one could discover their source; and that audacious actor who pretended to have fought by the side of Cæsar, to have witnessed the triumph of Trajan, and to have supped with Aspasia, Lucretia, and Cleopatra.

"One day," said the Marquis, "I and several of my friends determined to convict this man, whom the talk of the town had elevated into a sort of demigod, of falsehood. He had a servant, Joseph, who appeared to have been with him some time. We watched our opportunity, and on one occasion when there was a banquet, '*chez*' *la Guimard*, we disguised ourselves as valets, and slipped into the antechamber, where we knew we should find Joseph. The conversation turned on the merits, faults, and habits of the masters, and in this way we hoped to get something out of Joseph; but no; he was quite silent, in spite of all our endeavours. 'Pardieu!' said I, at last impatient at his obstinacy, 'at least

you can tell us the age of your master?' 'I am ignorant of his age,' answered he; 'all I know is, that I have been with him *four hundred years*.'"

The Marquis was fond of talking, and talked well; he had seen much, and observed much. At the age of twenty he wrote "Don Carlos," which had some success on the stage. In the commencement of his career, he had mixed a great deal in that theatrical life of which so much was talked and so little known; he had seen all the great theatrical stars of the eighteenth century—those artistes who were as much distinguished by their knowledge as by their simplicity. He liked talking of them. "Lekain," said he, "lived in the midst of his books; Brizard, a distinguished connoisseur in painting, was himself a very clever artist; Molé, Mouvel, Grandménil, were all members of the Institute. I paid a visit to Mdlle. Dumesnil one day in the country, and found her sitting by the side of a well, with a 'Suetonius' in her hand; she was studying the part of Agrippina. I well remember," added the Marquis, "a rehearsal of the 'Earl of Essex,' to which I had taken Lord Stanhope, who was then in Paris."

"'Who plays the Queen?' said he, looking about for the actress who was to fill the part.

"'There she is,' I answered, pointing out a very quiet-looking person.

"'What! That woman there, knitting?'

"'Precisely.'

"Lord Stanhope could not recover from his surprise; the actress, sitting quietly, knitting, while waiting for her 'cue,' upset all his theories. His astonishment soon ceased, however, when Mdlle. Dumesnil rose, put down her knitting, and walked on to the stage with inexpressible majesty. She had not yet said a word, when Lord Stanhope cried out, 'Ah! there, indeed, is Elizabeth of England!'

"Already at this period Mdlles. Clairon and Lekain had brought about a happy reform in stage costume, and in 1759 the Théâtre Français came to a decision which gave general satisfaction to the public. It was resolved to do away with the seats hitherto placed on each side of the stage. The theatre was thus, at last, freed from those useless gentlemen whose coming, for the most part, caused only scandal. Listen to what happened one night to the Marquis de Sablé, who came to the theatre after having drunk deeply of wine. They were playing Daucourt's 'Opéra de Village,' when, just as they commenced singing 'Que les prés seront *sablés*,' the Marquis appeared. '*Sablé!*' cried he; 'I am

insulted.' He sought out Daucourt, found him in the *coulisses*, and struck him. Daucourt immediately drew his sword, but the Marquis was dragged away and borne to his carriage, amidst the laughter and jeers of the public."

A rather singular incident happened to the Français a few years later. They had been for some time playing "The Siege of Calais" with enormous success, when an action was brought against one of the actors, named Dubois, by a surgeon, who had cured him of a certain recent illness. Dubois refused to pay, and, indeed, denied the debt. He was, accordingly, banished from the theatre; but his daughter, a young and pretty girl, interceded for him with the Duc de Frousac, and he was allowed to return. His companions, however, were furious, and refused to act with him; so "The Siege of Calais" was discontinued. It was now the public's right to be angry—a privilege of which it fully availed itself; but the actors stood out, and, accordingly, met their punishment: they were all arrested —Dauberval, Lekain, Molé, Brizard, and Mdlle. Clairon—and sent to Fort l'Evêque. It was a day of triumph for the great *tragédienne*, who was accompanied to the door of her prison by all the noble ladies of Paris. The affair terminated thus:

the author, Dubelloi, withdrew his piece; Dubois received a retiring pension, and the actors were set at liberty.

"Twenty years after this (added the Marquis) an adventure of a different kind happened at the Théâtre Français, where they were about to play "The Marriage of Figaro.' Beaumarchais had more trouble in getting his piece played than he had in writing it; and the intrigue of his comedy, complicated though it be, is little, compared with that which attended its progress towards the stage. 'Will it be played or not?' was the question asked everywhere. The Court and the town divided for or against. The manuscript was six times sent backwards and forwards from the police to the theatre, and from the theatre to the police. At last, on the 10th of May, 1783, when the parts had just been distributed to the actors, the King and Queen wished to see the piece, and it was read to them by Mdme. de Campan, from the author's manuscript.

"'It is detestable,' cried Louis XVI., after the reading was over. 'The Bastille must be destroyed before that piece can be played without dangerous consequences.'

"'Will it not be given; then?' said the Queen.

"'Certainly not; you may rest assured of it,' replied the King.

"The Queen was of a contrary opinion, and she contrived to gain over to her side the Count d'Artois, which was the more easily done, as he had recently conceived a passion for Mdlle. Coutat, to whom Beaumarchais had given the *rôle* of Susanne. In concert with M. de Vaudreuil and Mdme. de Polignac, the favourite of Marie Antoinette, they agreed together to try and gain the King's consent to the representation of the comedy; and, after much difficulty, succeeded; so that, on the 27th of April, 1784, the 'Marriage of Figaro' was definitely announced for that evening. A crowd at once began to assemble, and soon filled all the approaches to the Odéon. There was such a tumult as was never heard before. The people increased every moment, and the windows were filled with eager faces, all amused to see men even scaling the balcony of the theatre by the help of ropes, in spite of the Garde Française and the Suisse, who were sent to watch the proceedings. By-and-by, carriages, with armorial bearings on them, appeared, bearing the Court and nobility, all anxious to do homage to the "first night;" and at three in the afternoon not a place was to be had in the theatre. With great trouble I

reached the *fóyer*, and found a crowd of authors and celebrities assembled.

"'I trust,' said the Marquis de Bièvre, 'that this will not be like the first night of the 'Persifleur.'

"'Why?' asked Chamfort.

"'Because on that occasion the Père-siffleur had all his children in the theatre,' answered De Bièvre.

"Presently arrived Susanne and Cherubin, in the persons of Mdlle. Coutat and Mdlle. Olivier.

"'What do you think of her?' asked Mdlle. Coutat of Beaumarchais, after presenting to him Mdlle. Olivier.

"By way of answer, Beaumarchais embraced the young actress, who was certainly very pretty, with a fair skin, fair hair, and black eyes—a rare thing in a blonde. A naïveté full of *abandon*, innocence, and at times a shade of pensiveness, completed the charm of this young girl, whom death, alas! carried off three years after this. Beaumarchais was enchanted with the appearance of his character. 'Delicious!' he cried; 'I could fancy myself at Madrid.' All the actors were at last assembled in the *foyer*, while the audience, the greater part of whom had not dined, made a horrible noise in the theatre until the overture commenced. Finally came the play, and

then there was nothing but laughter and applause. The success was complete and triumphant. Mdlle. Coutat was superb in Susanne; and Préville embraced her on the stage, in the midst of all the applause.' "

After an absence from Paris of some years, which had been spent in exile with the Royal Princes, the Marquis returned and resumed his old play-going habits. "At this time," says he, '93, "the theatre had changed hands. The actors were no longer called the *comédiens ordinaires* of the King; they belonged to the people and played for the people. The theatre was called 'Le Théâtre de la République;' yet, notwithstanding, the actors held to their ancient traditions. They regretted royalty and the aristocrats, and had no pleasure in playing the political pieces presented to them. An author came one day to read a piece called, 'Le Jugement Dernier des Rois.' A member of the Convention was present as the author's friend. After the reading was over, Grandménil said to one of his comrades, 'If we receive it, and the others (the kings) come back, we shall be hanged.'

" 'Would you prefer,' said the *Conventionnel*, 'to be hanged for not having received it?' "

Thermidor brought back joy and hope to artistes.

They all came back triumphant after their long absence.

"I must tell you something about Mdlle. Coutat —which occurs to me at this moment," said the Marquis.

"Louise Coutat was not only a great actress but a charming woman. To a long experience of the world she united much natural *esprit* and the advantages of a good education. She was celebrated for the piquancy and charm of her conversation. After the representation of 'Pamela' she was arrested and taken to St. Pelagie, at the very time when Josephine La Pagerie de Beauharnais was an inmate. Their prison chambers were close together, and an intimacy soon sprang up between the two captives. The gaiety of the actress helped to enliven the solitude of her companion; and at such times a smile that had something of hope in it would part the lips of the young creole, and she would draw from her breast a talisman bearing these words:—'You will sigh and suffer; but hope, wait, and you will be queen of a great empire.' 'Ah!' she would cry, 'half of the prediction is accomplished; but how is it possible to realize the other?' 'You must hope and wait,' said Louise.

"Two years later Mdme. Beauharnais met Bona-

parte for the first time; and all the world knows how the other part of the prophecy came to be fully realized. Mdlle. Coutat had, up to this time, continued to visit her companion in misfortune; but when a throne was placed between them, the actress was too well acquainted with etiquette, and knew the world too well, not to retire into the back-ground. One evening, however, the Court being at St. Cloud, the company of the Français were called there to play 'The Misanthrope.' The Célimene showed herself in all her glory, and was afterwards presented to Josephine, who received her with her accustomed grace and kindness, though gently reproaching her for her abandonment. Mdlle. Coutat was invited to breakfast the following day. But she had no sooner left the palace than Mdme. de Larochefoucault, lady of honour, interfered, and thought it her duty to observe to her Majesty that such an invitation was contrary to all rules of etiquette, and that, consequently, it might be displeasing to the Emperor. Josephine yielded to these representations, and it was decided that an excuse should be made to Mdlle. Coutat on her presenting herself. Accordingly, on the following morning, when the actress arrived, she was met by Mdme. de Larochefoucault, who informed her that the Empress would

be unable to see her that day, as she had a violent *migraine*, and would be obliged to remain in bed; but that her Majesty had commissioned her (Mdme. de Larochefoucault) to act in her stead, and to receive Mdlle. Coutat. The keen-witted actress, however, at once guessed the truth; and gracefully excused herself, saying that she herself had a breakfast engagement which she had forgotten, and that she had only driven to St. Cloud to inquire after the Empress. After many expressions of regret and respect, therefore, she re-entered her carriage and started for Paris; but was met by the Emperor, who, returning to St. Cloud, recognized Mdlle. Coutat, and stopped his carriage. 'I thought, Madame,' said he, 'that you were to breakfast with the Empress to-day?'

"'Sire, the health of her Majesty——'

"'Ah! yes, I had forgotten,' said Napoleon, smiling; 'but, since you came to breakfast with the Empress, will you remain and breakfast with the Emperor?'

"Shortly afterwards, Napoleon entered the palace of St. Cloud with Mdlle. Coutat, whom he presented to his wife. The *migraine* had entirely disappeared; Napoleon was in one of his rare moods of *abandon;* Mdlle. Coutat was dazzling, witty and gay; and the

breakfast was charming. Mdlle. Coutat abandoned the scene of her triumphs at a comparatively early age. At thirty-seven she gave up the *rôles* of coquettes, and began to play the mothers; a few years afterwards she quitted the stage, but she left behind her a competent successor in the person of Mdlle. Mars, who at this period (1812) was in all the *éclat* of her beauty and talent. A perfect diction, a delicate raillery; rare ease, a mixture of mobility and grace, exquisite elegance—such were the elements of success all united in this incomparable model. And yet the commencement of her career was far from giving promise of the brilliant actress, the woman of tact, and of the great world. The first part she played was that of the brother of Jocrisse in the 'Désespoir de Jocrisse,' which made the fame and fortune of Brunet. This is the history of the piece which sent all Paris to the Théâtre Montansier. Two *littérateurs*, who were also men of learning and men of fashion—Aude, Knight of Malta, and formerly secretary to M. de Buffon, and Dorvigny, professor of ancient literature at the College Mazarin—both lost place and fortune in the revolution of '89. Thrown together as much by talent as misfortune, they sought the stage as a refuge, and took to dramatic writing. At that time it was customary to

pay the author a certain sum of money after the reading of his piece. This was his sole remuneration, and he was thus obliged to wait until the success of his work was exhausted—often a long time—before he could receive money for a fresh piece. Aude and Dorvigny were in this predicament, when one morning, while they were sitting in the *foyer* of the Théâtre Montansier deploring their wretched plight, they heard that a reading which was expected to take place that day was obliged to be put off in consequence of the illness of the author. A light broke upon Dorvigny. 'This is just the opportunity we wanted,' said he. 'The committee has not been warned, and will presently arrive. Let us take the author's place, and read ourselves.'

"'Read!' returned the other; 'but we have neither subject nor title.'

"'A subject?' replied Dorvigny, reflecting. 'I have one; and here is a good title, 'Jocrisse!'

"'So be it,' said Aude. 'You shall read the first half and I the second. We will divide the money, and go and enjoy the evening *chez* Baucelin.'

"Ten minutes afterwards Aude and Dorvigny were seated before the committee, improvising a charming comedy in prose, with couplets, amid the laughter and applause of the assembly. When it

was over, Brunet, left alone, unfolded the manuscript, looked at it, and was stupefied at seeing a quire of blank paper, on which was simply written the word 'Jocrisse!' Several days passed without anything being heard of the authors, who, in the meantime, finding it utterly impossible to remember their improvisation, had decided to avow their trick, promising to set to work on another piece. Brunet, who had been delighted with his *rôle*, was in despair at hearing this news, and begged them still to try and recall the piece. Suddenly Dorvigny cried out, 'I have it, I have found my Jocrisse; and this time he shall not escape me.' The piece was at once written, and came out a few days afterwards at the Montansier."

For a year I was one of the faithful of the orchestra stalls, where the Marquis never failed to occupy his usual seat. One night, however, his place was empty: the *spirituel* Marquis de Ximenes, the last *habitué* of the Théâtre Français, was no more. He had died while relating an anecdote of Mdlle. Coutat, to the *curé* of the parish!

CHAPTER XV.

PARIS. AT THE MAY EXHIBITION.

WHILE the Hanging Committee were busy, in the spring of 1864, in the spacious galleries of the Champs Elysées, contemporary Art in France suffered one or two serious blows. Only two days before the doors of the gallery were thrown open to admit the public, the historical painter Flandrin was borne from the church of St. Germain-des-Prés, which he had enriched with his pencil, to his last rest. The same newspaper which announced the funeral of Flandrin made known the death of Dubufe the elder, the popular historical and portrait painter. But these two announcements did not complete the losses the Art-world of France was to incur at one blow. The sheet I have already quoted included a third paragraph, in which it was announced that the mind of M. Troyon had completely given way, and that he had been removed, to the inexpressible grief of his friends and fellow-artists, to a lunatic asylum. M. Troyon enjoyed a high reputation in

England; and his success in perfidious Albion has often given reins to the quick imagination of his *confrères*. He is supposed to have received fabulous sums from John Bull, for his pictures; and there are not wanting scandal-mongers who assert that his earnings whetted his hunger for money, until gold became his waking dream, and, in the end, unseated his reason. I am told that he made it a rule to earn fifty francs every morning before breakfast by painting dealers' pictures; and that he then went to his serious works. But who shall say what is true of men here, where *chroniqueurs* dine by the score on scandal?

It will be remembered by many English readers that great discontent was manifested in 1863 by French artists in consequence of the wholesale rejection of pictures by the Committee. A sweeping reform has been the result of the loud murmurs of 1863. The tyranny of that "celebrated antique coterie," the Academy of Fine Arts, is at an end. The severity and the narrow-mindedness with which the old sticklers for the classic school exercised their powers of selection and rejection, kept men of brilliant genius, like Decamps and others, out of the national exhibition at the Louvre, and drove them into the hands of picture-dealers, through whose

agency alone their works could reach the public. The jury that selects and rejects is now a liberal representative body. Many visitors to the spacious and admirably lighted picture galleries in the Palais de l'Industrie, will say that the new Committee have been too liberal, and that a few hundred of the two thousand works exhibited might have been returned to their producers, with much advantage to the general effect of the Exhibition. At length no French artist can grumble. The new jury have admitted a great many very poor pictures, and some execrable ones; but they have crushed no unknown genius, since they have found room for every applicant. The works are divided into two broad categories; namely, those which are deemed of sufficient merit to compete for one of the medals that are annually distributed, and those which are decidedly too poor to be taken into consideration. The jury, having unlimited space at their command, afford room to all comers, whether natives or foreigners! so that now France may be said to have established a great Annual Art Exhibition that is open to the world, and that is governed in a manner worthy of her artistic fame. The mode in which State recognition of artistic merit is distributed, is capable of amendment. It is not founded in justice. The

medals are all alike; so that he who has produced the work that is unanimously pronounced to be the masterpiece of the year, receives exactly the same reward which is delivered to the producer of a work which has secured a medal by a majority of one: unless, indeed, the former should be entitled to the award of one of the two exceptional prizes of two thousand and four hundred francs each. These two exceptional prizes, which have been placed at the disposition of the jury, in addition to forty medals, have created considerable discontent among the artists. The two exceptional rewards are intended to mark some superlative and commanding excellence. Well, this year, the jury have decided that neither in the section of painting, engraving, nor architecture, does this commanding excellence exist. One of the extraordinary rewards has, however, been given to a young sculptor, who died a few months since. The work of this promising artist, cut off in his youth, which has merited the high distinction the jury have put upon it, is the rough beginning of a Mercury. It is, without doubt, a most promising foundation of a great work! but it is only a foundation; as the reader will readily understand when I tell him that the right arm is wanting to the

figure. The jury were almost unanimous in their award of one of the exceptional prizes to the late M. Brian's unfinished figure; passing over MM. Rochet, Jacquemart (whose small figure of Bonaparte is a perfect study), Carpeaux, and that courageous and conscientious young sculptor, Falquière, who this year sent a fine piece from Rome. The jury have passed over the merits of the living, and have given their reward to the dead. Paris critics have explained this action of the jury by declaring that they gave the great medal to a dead man lest they should be reduced to the necessity of encouraging a living one, and of putting him over their own heads. Under the old system, the men who awarded the prizes, being already snugly housed for life in the Institute, the goal of every French artist's ambition; did not place even him to whom they gave the Grand Medal, on an equality with themselves. It is urged against the jury, as at present constituted, that some of its members are still in the list of candidates for honours, and that, therefore, they would not give the Grand Medal even to Meissonnier, whose picture of the Emperor at Solferino, surrounded by his staff, is, perhaps, the most extraordinary and successful effort he has made; nor

to Amaury Duval, whose picture is agreed, on all sides, to be a gem that does honour to the French School.

To my mind, the day to see the Exhibition, that is to say to see its brightest effects, and its picturesque and amusing aspect, is Sunday. On this day it is open gratuitously to all classes of Frenchmen. Nothing can be more admirable than the effect of the broad glazed nave, prettily laid out as a garden, with the groups of sculpture so dotted about it, that each work stands fairly alone to challenge the criticism of the visitor. The paintings, water-colour drawings, architectural designs, and engravings find commodious room (albeit they may be counted by the thousand) in the spacious, admirably lighted north galleries of the Palais de l'Industrie.

Of the Exhibition generally, it may be said, that it is one in which mediocrity commands nineteen-twentieths of the space. Although there were 1969 paintings in the various galleries last summer, nearly all the celebrated French living painters were absent from the catalogue. In the list of absentees were Ingres, Cabanel, Pils, Robert-Fleury, Couture, Rosa Bonheur, Léon Cogniet, Lami, Gleyre, Isabey, Brascassat, Tournemine, and others. There were in the

two thousand frames some meritorious, many promising, and only a few commanding, works. On entering the galleries an English visitor must always be struck by the novelty—to him—of the subjects upon the walls. There is the usual number of religious paintings, destined for country churches. The portraits are many. The Horrible has its faithful and relentless illustrators. There are classical subjects ambitiously treated; there is the usual sprinkling of Ledas and kindred subjects; and finally there are a few humorous pictures of the Webster School. The crowds of Sunday visitors flock about Winterhalter's new portrait of the Empress (certainly not one of his happiest works); Meissonnier's exquisitely executed group of the Emperor at Solferino, upon which he has worked so long; Gustave Moreau's "Œdipus and the Sphynx" (a startling work, if there ever was one); Charles Marchal's "Servants' Hiring in Alsatia" (a fresh and dainty bit of life that comes home to all the work-folk, who stare at it and utter dry bits of humour about it); Fromentin's vigorously painted study of "Arab Horsemen surprised by the Simoom," that in a solid black mass is moving, with awful majesty, towards them; and the more noticeable landscapes of Theodore Rousseau, Corot, Chaintreuil, D'Aubigny, and others. The

knowing Paris critics delight in collecting the quaint or foolish exclamations of the Sunday crowd, made before the pictures. On Sunday, the 1st of May, 1864, 22,000 people passed through the galleries. They were of all classes, except the highest or richest class. The honest *bourgeois* was there, with his wife, and his boys in their trim college uniform. St. Cyr and the Polytechnic School sent their contingents of lively young men. There were dapper clerks by the dozen; shop-girls, tastily dressed, with their cavaliers! and crowds of workmen, with their wives or sweethearts, in their crisp white caps. Nor were children and babies turned from the doors. All these visitors were animated and unconstrained in their expressions of opinion. They threw themselves into attitudes before the pictures; descanted on their merits; were in rapture at any homely bit like G. Breton's "Turkey-Driver," and called to their neighbours, when they were pleased, to come and share their satisfaction. The military showed in force among the 22,000 visitors. It was amusing to watch the dull stare of the Piou-Pious at "The Sphynx," or Hamon's "Aurora drinking Dew from the Flowers." The military must have been disappointed this year, for there were fewer battle pieces than usual in the Exhibition. The *peuple*

regretted, I have no doubt, the absence of some of Yvon's and Doré's immense studies of hand-to-hand fighting; with the ghastly foregrounds of the dying clutching the grass, or begging for water in the sweat of death. The First Napoleon made remarkably few appearances; and in these he is not shown to advantage. We found him on shipboard in one room, and in another, entering the studio of the painter David, with his Empress. This latter picture was one of the ugliest and feeblest to be found in the Exhibition. The Emperor was execrably painted, and the figure of David, in an ultramarine tailed coat, was an eyesore. But the picture was one of the great Napoleon, and the people lingered lovingly about it.

A noticeable feature in the 1864 Exhibition was the increase in the number of domestic and humorous subjects; and these, although many of them were poor pictures, attracted crowds to them. "Signing the Contract of Marriage," "A Flirtation in an Opera Box," characteristic incidents in the lives of children, make popular canvases, although the artist's skill is of the feeblest.

These were a few of my impressions on a first journey from home to the National Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture of 1864 — an institution

which the Art-world of France owes to the Second Empire. English visitors to Paris should visit these liberally governed exhibitions of national art, if only to see how much better such matters are managed in France than they are by their high mightinesses the Royal Academicians of England:

CHAPTER XVI.

PROGRESS, FROM A FRENCH POINT OF VIEW.

M. ABOUT (whom I have followed from the day when he gave "Tolla" to the world, and whose last book reaches my study wet from the press) has the faculty of making himself amusing. He is always bright and picturesque—whether dealing with the temporalities of the Pope or surveying the universe at the suggestion of Madame George Sand. He is a strong writer, and his contrasts are striking. His boldness never deserts him, even when he is dealing with matters which have given pause to the greatest intellects. The book I hold in my hand is M. About's frank opinion of his contemporaries, and on the spirit of the times. He has obliged the world with this comprehensive confession on things sacred and profane, at the instigation of Madame Sand, to whom he dedicates it. The capital with which he starts on his intellectual journey round the world, he lays bluntly before his readers:—"I have

received from nature," he says, "only an atom of good sense—a crumb swept from under the table where Rabelais and Voltaire, Frenchmen *par excellence*, ate their bellyful." We turn to M. About's school. "The school to which I belong," he admits, "is composed of positive minds, that are antagonistic to all the seductions of hypothesis, and will only reckon up demonstrated facts. We do not deny the existence of a supernatural world: we only wait until its existence is proved, and, meantime, we shut ourselves up within the limits of the real."

And, with this confession, M. About starts on his long journey, noting, in his own way, all the progresses of the world, from its nebulous to its present condition. He treats of the brute creation as well as of man; and of both with freedom. He handles the gorilla, as knowing more about him than Prof. Owen or any other comparative anatomist. He affirms that it is a question of slender importance whether or not man sprang from the animal next in rank to him. M. About, however, accepts man as the supreme effort of nature—nature's latest work—but he is not prepared to admit that the human race may not be, in its turn, superseded: that the hunter of to-day may not be the game in the future.

M. About defines Progress—as he understands it. It is the advancement of the human being, both morally and physically. He takes the Indian's view, that every man who has planted a tree before he dies, has not lived in vain.

From these starting points, the author casts his eyes over the world, and endeavours to sum up the results of human activity on the globe: to define that which is good; to explain man's rights; to shadow forth the effects of association; to discuss property, the budget, education, politics, war—in short, human affairs generally. The result of the manner in which M. About has executed his ambitious plan is not a profound, but an eloquent, a various, and a highly amusing book. It is full of happy turns of thought, of quaint fancies, and of generous aspirations. It will be read, not for the philosophy that is in it, but for the brightness, the vigour, and the completeness shown in the treatment of each separate subject. Even the audacity of the writer, who talks of the time when man was "a promising subaltern in the great army of monkeys," has its attraction. M. About marshals a few of the men who will deserve well of posterity. The passage, it seems to me, is in his best manner:—

And we also, poor scribblers, we shall have well deserved our future. It is not only because a small pamphleteer named Pascal invented the wheelbarrow, nor because two or three others solved the problem of aërial navigation; nor even because somebody or other from time to time enounced a truth of universal interest, such as the sovereignty of the people, or the principle of nationality. Were we only simple mediums, hawkers of ideas, and nothing more, our part would be an important one. Ideas, like capital, multiply by circulation; it follows, therefore, that we fulfil the same functions as M. de Rothschild, only at a lower remuneration—that is the difference. A few days ago, as I came along the road to Phalsbourg, I met with a little pedlar, who appeared to be between forty and fifty. He was sitting down to rest on a block of stone. I sat down beside him, and after we had exchanged remarks as to the weather, I asked him if he was contented with his lot. He shook his head in a melancholy way, and answered, "I am a dealer in spectacles, a travelling dealer, as you see. Business would do well enough, for even the poorest and most ignorant men now-a-days like to see. The worst of it is, that you cannot enter a village without the boys throwing stones at you, and without the *gendarmes* asking for your 'papers.' One can easily get rid of the *gamins*, but the *gendarmes* are the devil. They cross-question you, as if you were a felon; and the annoyance of being taken for what I am not, has tempted me a thousand times to abandon the whole thing. I go on, however; for one must live; and, besides, I say to myself every night when I go to bed, that many people, men and brothers, would be blind if I did not carry to their distant villages the means of seeing." "Hold there," cried I, "nearly all my friends carry on the same trade as yourself. They hawk about all over France and Europe glasses of all kinds, suited to the eyes of the people. They sell pink glasses, in which the unhappy see a future of justice and equality; they have blue ones, which permit a simple citizen to look at gilded thrones and glittering crowns without being in the least dazzled; then there are magnifying glasses,

by which a useful man will appear to you ten times greater than a prefect in all his glory. By the aid of instruments which they carry about, even into the country, you will see cheats unmasked, oppressors turned out, burdens lightened, men all united to do good; truth, labour, and right reigning everywhere." "*Parbleu!* my good sir, that commerce resembles mine just as a telescope of a hundred thousand francs resembles a ten-sous pair of spectacles. I should hope that your friends have nothing to fear from *gamins* or *gendarmes*." "To tell you the truth, they are principally inconvenienced by the *chefs-de-bureau*." The hawker lifted his hat at the name, for every one in France knows that the *chefs-de-bureau* have been, from time immemorial, the real masters of the country. It is, thanks to their prudence, and in the interest of their security, that the press has never been free. Sovereigns, who read little, care but indifferently for what is written; it happens sometimes that ministers are bold enough to follow out their own path, without fearing criticism. But the most liberal prince and the most intrepid minister will never obtain liberty for us from the *chefs-du-bureau*. Each of them is firmly convinced that every journalist wants to sell red glasses to the people, in order to overthrow the Government, and take possession of the *bureaux*. Alas! what should we do there? Our humble trade of dealers in spectacles would still be the best, and the most useful to Progress that we could pursue. Much better remain as we are, although we come in for none of the general rejoicings, although the kind public does not always recompense us for the rigours of administration, and although we ourselves do not perceive, even in the far-distant horizon, that consolation of the proud—glory! We must, then, make our choice; we shall never obtain but collective glory. No one of us—unless by an extraordinary and unforseen chance—will ever leave his name to posterity. But, after all, what matters? The good that we shall have left will not be lost. Let us work.

The fourth division of the work treats of Labour.

In the opening page M. About reminds his readers of the workmen's song of 1848. Work is liberty! M. About is then at some pains to show that labour is not a duty, but a destiny—a natural law. And he ridicules the aristocratic contempt for work which, he alleges, is still firmly rooted among his countrymen. "Whom to marry" in France is humorously set forth. Passages like the following abound in M. About's "Progress":—

A manufacturer, who has enriched himself by the most useful, and, therefore, the most noble of industries, believes that in marrying his daughter to a Marquis he elevates himself a rank higher in the social scale. The older the family of the young man the more exulting the father-in-law. Only think! for four hundred years no one person in the family of my son-in-law has ever made any use of his ten fingers! If a gentleman cannot be got, a son of a bourgeois family is selected. His parents have worked; it is unfortunate; but, thanks to Heaven! they have retired from business now upwards of ten years. We are quite easy as to him; *he* shall never do anything. An official is another advantageous selection. Officials do so little in our admirable country! They go to their offices to ease their conscience; their duties are so slight that they have almost the right to call themselves pensioners of the State. The most sought after amongst them are naturally those who gain the most money with the least fatigue. For instance, a Receiver-General leaving college! That is what is called a very deserving young man! A hundred thousand francs to earn, and *nothing* to do! At the most a few signatures to make: a white negro, his representative, does all the rest. And this person is a somebody!—the third authority in the department. What father would hesi-

tate ten minutes between an official and a man of business, even were the latter ten times the richer and more intelligent of the two? The official is almost a gentleman; he does so little! When a young girl is unfortunately reduced to marry a handsome young man, rich, well educated, honourable, well brought up, and gaining twenty thousand crowns a year in business, she is a long time in explaining her fall to her school friend. "My husband is in business, but in a very large way: a great deal of it is wholesale. He does very little in it; indeed, he scarcely goes to his office for more than half an hour a day. However, we think of giving it up altogether shortly." The friend, who is going to marry a sub-prefect, with four thousand five hundred francs a year, embraces her warmly, and says, "Poor dear little thing. I shall always feel the same towards you. My husband has no prejudices; you must present your husband to us *when he has retired!*"

The ridiculous side of the question could not be more happily put. The author strengthens his position in favour of work, with personal references. He informs his readers that M. Victor Hugo has been consoled during his exile in Guernsey by the enlightened and scholarly friendship of a grocer, who owns an admirable library. A grocer is, in France—well, less than a tailor is in England. M. About confesses that he knows a young cavalry officer who left the army to become a grocer, and who remains a perfect gentleman behind the counter. Another friend, who was a public teacher, has degraded himself to the rank of a purveyor of sardines!

And M. About would like to know what the deposed one has lost. "I am sure that he is no longer asked to the rector's *soirées*, and that he has lost thereby three glasses of *eau sucrée*." As a compensation, the sardine vendor is making a fortune. Here is an example of the author's breadth of view:—

There was an epoch when two poor men used to carry a rich one about the streets of Paris in his chair. This disgraceful exhibition, which astonished no one in 1764, would cause an *émeute* now-a-days. Man no longer likes to see his species doing the duty of a horse. We possess now, in 1864, 3,000,000 of horses, asses and mules, and 2,000,000 of draught oxen. This is a pretty beginning, but it is not the end of our progress. 29,000,000 of inhabitants who people Great Britain have made with their own hands 83,000,000 of metallic horses, without counting their other cattle. These 83,000,000 of cast-iron animals, which consume coal instead of corn, do the work, taking one year with another, of 400,000,000 of men. Thus each islander is served by the power of thirteen or fourteen men who feel neither fatigue nor pain, and whom the engineer cures with a hammer when they are ill. Here are successors already found for our mere day labourers. Have you quite understood me? It is neither desirable nor likely that man's labour should disappear from the earth, but with a little energy we may create instruments that will mitigate its severity for our descendants. It is for us to save future generations unnecessary and endless fatigue, and so to deliver them from the degradation which it causes.

M. About dreams of the days when there will be no ploughmen toiling in the furrow; and when steam and electricity will do all the hard work of

farming. He marks what progress the world has already made; and where he looks forward, glances with a liberal eye, and hopes with a generous heart. And so I put him in a snug corner on a favourite shelf.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LITERATURE OF TRIUMPH.

HERE are the singers this 15th of August, 1859—but where is the song? Grisettes and students are grouping under the Tuileries chestnuts,—workmen are shouting in the Barrière wine-shops,—ragpickers are tipsily musical in the Rue Mouffetard: but where are the words of fire? Here is another *Caporal*—but where is Béranger? Belmontet, in Imperial livery! the grisettes will none of him. His verses are not destined to reach the dark recesses of the *Drapeau Rouge*, where the *chiffonniers* are hoarsely grunting their content that France is glorious. The Polytechnic boys are not stirred by the lyre of a footman. Yet they are stirred; even the heavy Auvergnats, waddling under the weight of their water-cans, are moved. As the wounded soldiers, in worn regimentals, lounge about the streets, eyes brim with tears and tender words follow them. While the oriflammes are grouped about the tall red pillars along the Boulevards, gawky country

folk stare, but are mute. Why the *concierges* would join in a refrain—were there any refrain to join in! Here is a vast musical party, without music. Some million of lucifer-matches, but nothing to rub them upon! Jules Roquette pipes *La Milanaise*, and calls it a war song; but its music has not power to travel far beyond the modest precincts of his publisher's shop. Adolphe Morphey valiantly tries to awaken the national voice; but how can his countrymen appeal, with him, to the Venetians? M. Morphey's lyre promised these Venetians freedom from the tyrant, some weeks since; but what say the Venetians to M. Morphey now—if, indeed, the Morphey muse ever charmed Venetian ears? There is the *Ménage du Zouave* musically described in the cool evenings at the *Café des Ambassadeurs;* and from the *Ancien Café Morel* the excited Parisian may catch the vigorous notes of the trumpet of Marengo. But where shall we find the song of triumph?

The sense of triumph was never stronger than it is to-day among these mercurial millions of holiday-makers. They adore every uniform in the French army. They bear with the brutal swagger of the coarsest sapper. They are at the feet of every corporal. The drummers live in the hearts of their

countrymen. Happy is the grisette who can lean upon the arm of a mahogany-headed Zouave; proud is the lady whose brother is a sergeant, wearing a shako, rusty from the sun of Italy. These would sing to their darling warriors some grand song of Solferino, some thrilling words of Magenta. There are sweet voices ready in all the Boulevard theatres to chant a great hymn to the army of Italy; but there is no hymn ready in Paris—there is only Belmontet! We are told that great occasions bring forth great men; that in the womb of big events lie the men to dominate them. But the army of Napoleon the Third has entered Paris, amid mad excitement, under a heavy rain of tears, tented by ladies' pocket-handkerchiefs from the sun,—and the big event has brought forth no minstrel to lead a national song of praise. No supremely eloquent tongue has spoken; no thrilling harp has struck upon the highly charged atmosphere,—as a harp mournfully touched the national heart in 1848, when certain dead were borne along the gloomy Boulevards: as a darkly eloquent voice chanted the doom of the Sixteenth Louis!

Was the event, then, not a great one? Could people give those heavy sums for airy perches, whence, at the risk of breaking their necks, they

might see Napoleon's soldiers pass, without feeling, heart and soul, bound up with the glory of the troops? Could tens of thousands of people scramble through the choking dust to St. Maur to feast their eyes upon the dirty insolent Turcos—and still not care for the Turcos? We must beat about to find the meaning of all this street enthusiasm, unaccompanied by a word to rally the enthusiasts. Our natural allies (who are the most artificial people on the face of the earth—the born supreme manufacturers of artificial flowers) are easily excited, and are very fond of oriflammes, and plaster of Paris Victories, and columns of Legion of Honour nominations in the *Moniteur*. The sash of the prefect pleases them. The sound of the drum is their music of the spheres. They live out of doors, and they live for amusement. Now, the entry of a victorious army of their own countrymen into Paris must surely be considered a great addition to the day's amusement on the Boulevards. The tears and the handkerchiefs are part of the amusement. Amusement, at seventy francs a-head (for a good seat), ought to be intense. It was intense accordingly. The day when some of these troops fired into the windows of peaceful citizens was put aside. The people would be merry; there were theatres and

fireworks to come. A feast of glory, hot and hot, for the morning,—fiery eagles with their claws in gunpowder worlds rising just over the old National Assembly in the evening:—could anything be more grateful to the Parisian heart? All that was wanted, we repeat, was the poet with his song, that there might be choruses on the way home at night,—choruses in the wine-shops,—choruses to enliven the already lively dances of the Closerie! To be glorious from the tassel of the cap to the heel of the *sabot*, and not to have a line to express the glory,—this was hard.

Rumours travelled on their stealthy way to account for this. Alphonse, your barber, had heard that the Emperor went to St. Maur two days before the entry of their troops, to regain their favour. The Turcos were angry with him that he had not allowed them to suck the blood from the throats of a few more Austrians. The Quartier St. Antoine was not satisfied: Louis had not freed Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic. Very old men who could remember the great day when the spoils of Italian Museums were borne through the streets; when the Old Guard appeared, worn with the labour of a hundred rapid victories; and when the Little Corporal had put the iron crown of Lombardy upon his

compact brow, saying, "Beware who touches it!"—old men, to whom these stirring times were distinct memories, shrugged their shoulders, over the game of triumph of the junior empire. The troops had returned, according to the old men at the Invalides, after a mere taste of war. The affair was a fortunate one for Paris tradesmen; for the modellers in plaster; the gilders of eagles; the contrivers of Venetian twopenny lamps—but it would be forgotten on the 16th! Solferino was not an Austerlitz: Magenta was not a patch upon Marengo. Where, too, was Louis's Bridge of Arcola? Magenta, M. de Cassagnac answers. "Tut! tut!" exclaim the Invalides. Thus the old guard speaks to the new guard. And the impression among sober-minded people in Paris is, that the number of plaster Victories about the Rue de la Paix is disproportioned to the occasion. It is true, the sober-minded observer says, that the *peuple* is in a state of furious effervescence; and that the spectacle of the wounded parading the Boulevards has touched the hearts of the people who paid sixty francs for a sight of the marching hospital, encouraged by the clang of cymbals and the deafening roll of drums—but the soul of France has not been stirred, or the minstrel to sing of her new glory would

have touched his harp and cleared his throat ere this.

Still the triumphs of the Second Empire demand their interpreters. The passing excitement must be fed with print and paper of some kind. Words, sounding as the Zouave's trumpets, must be given to the citizens, who love the grandiose, the sublime: who cap mean little traders with lofty titles, and make an artist of a penny barber. Attitudes must be struck, to suit the cabman and the waiter—as they were struck by De Morny, when in green and gold, at the head of the Legislative Corps, he met the hero of Solferino on his return from the war. The fleshing of the Third Napoleon's maiden sword must have its story told to the commissionnaire as to the commissaire. In default of even an Arnault, an Amédée de Cesena must be called in.

"Confederated Italy," in weekly threepenny numbers—with a coloured representation of fierce Turcos by way of frontispiece, exactly suits the spasmodic pen of loyal Amédée. He starts in sharp short sentences, to do honour to the Achilles of St. Cloud. The words of Achilles, on the 1st of January, 1859, to the Austrian ambassador suddenly brought the Italian question to light. This question now "left the dominions of theory to enter the

region of facts." Achilles' celebrated words were the lightning which predicted the storm. Vague rumours circulated. "People said on all sides that Austria was sufficiently abandoned by God, to prefer the fortune of arms to the resolutions of diplomacy." Thus, in the midst of the reader's breathless excitement, M. de Cesena drops long letters and speeches into his book—these are the pauses in the loud song of praise. The praise is for everybody. M. Baroche, in asking the Council of State for more soldiers, explained the reasons for this augmentation "in language as dignified as it was sober." The Corps Législatif was, according to M. de Cesena, "the living personification of the country" in this solemn crisis. Then follow more speeches: that the reader may gain breath to bear the "frightful rapidity" of subsequent events. The Austrian troops crossed the frontiers of Piedmont. Now the question which, on the 1st of January, had "left the domains of theory to enter the region of facts," went once more on its travels—leaving, on this occasion, "the regions of politics and diplomacy, to enter the domain of military facts." With a flourish of Cesena trumpets, the appeal of the Emperor to the French people, of the 3rd of May, is set forth in imposing type. This is the appeal in which

his Majesty declared that Austria had carried matters to an extremity which left only two alternatives to Europe. She must be allowed to dominate to the foot of the Alps; or Italy must be freed from her cruel rule, to the Adriatic. More, Italy must be left to herself; she must not merely change her masters. How far the author pleased his Imperial master by printing these promises and views of the 3rd of May, when they might be compared with the positon of affairs on the 15th of August, is a question for M. de Cesena's own judgment. He has experience in royal puffery; and in his description of the people waiting about the Tuileries to see Achilles go to the wars, in his gilded coach and with his silk tent, the court writer shows himself to be expert in his art. A little exaggeration is permissible. We are told that old and young—men, women and children, waited about till midnight to bless his Majesty,; his Majesty being comfortably bedded, while, in his honour, the old were courting rheumatism, and the young consumption, at his palace-gates. As for subscriptions to the loan, and the applications to serve in Italy, it was impossible to write them down. The delight of the people knew no bounds. "For," writes M. de Cesena, Literary Trumpet to Napoleon the Third, "there

was in this delirium of the masses an instinctive joy at the instalment of vengeance that France was about to take upon the plains of Lombardy and Piedmont, for that unfortunate defeat of 1815, the memory of which still troubles them, even in the grandeur and prosperity of the present hour. France will never forget Waterloo; she will remember it always, colouring with anger, and weeping in despair. This name will never fade from her memory. This idea will possess her in the midst of her triumphs and her *fêtes*—unless it be vouchsafed to her to tear the bloody page (written by treason and fate) from her history, with her victorious sword!

"They who think that France has forgotten, that she can forget, Waterloo, know nothing of her soul and her genius. They cannot understand her. She works her way calmly, but she remembers. Let her be made richer than any nation on the face of the earth has ever been, she will still remember. Let everything be given to her, glory, power, liberty, —she will always remember. But let her be sent, for one day only, upon the battle-field, to take a last, a real revenge for Waterloo—then she might, she would forget."

This is an official song, almost as clearly acknow-

ledged as were the verses of Arnault when Marie Louise entered Paris. It was to pass under the eyes of Napoleon the Third's troops. Was the exciting reference to Waterloo meant to allay the martial ardour of the Camp of St. Maur? M. de Cesena is not without rivals.

"Homage to the French army" appears upon the last page of the *Patrie*, in gigantic letters. It is M. L. P. Mongruel who takes his hat off to the heroes of Solferino, and offers them a dictionary of glory, for the small sum of two francs. Considering that M. Mongruel calls the campaign in Lombardy, Louis Napoleon's "War of Independence," we need not follow the vendor of forty-sous homage through his alphabetical arrangement of glory. His enthusiasm very closely resembles that of the man of business who lately advertised 800 African palms for sale, at the lowest possible price—considering that the Turcos and the Zouaves were at St. Maur. Edouard Fournier is delighted with this advertisement, and declares that France is the only country where the advertiser could be certain that he would sell his palms. "Glory," says the *chroniqueur*, "is not cheapened with us."

Still glory will have its cheap song. The deeds of Magenta and Solferino must be told to all. If there

be no genius strong enough to lead the nation in chorus, little pipes must be tuned. If even a song as strong as *La Casquette au pèr' Bugeaud* cannot be raised, cheap prose must soak the glory of Solferino into the dense masses of the villages. In the penny *Pays*, Granier de Cassagnac chants the glory of the French army and the Sovereign "who knows how to give and win great battles." Concierges, Auvergnats, frequenters of forty-centime wine-shops, read flashy De Cassagnac, and go, happy, to the dark corners where poor Paris sleeps—for France is, in truth, the first country on the face of the earth, and they are part of France.

There is a five-centime—a half-penny public. It is a great, quick-witted, excitable public,—a public that shows its low caps over the tops of barricades when Paris is in a state of revolution. This half-penny host christens public men damaging names—points coarse, but telling jokes—is the author of Plon-Plon, the Rois des Gueux, and other terrible nicknames: and is proud of its blouse.

Said Dr. S. R. P. Grandménil, "I will produce something that shall suit the *bourgeoisie* and the *peuple*. I'll start a penny "Victory!" *La Victoire* appeared accordingly, on the 10th of July, 1859, and included an account of the Battle of Solférino,

together with official reports—all cut very handsomely from the daily papers. It had been suggested to the Doctor, it would appear, that he might find it difficult to make his journal a permanent one. "France might suffer a defeat!"

Thereupon the cruel Doctor proceeds to smother his unfortunate correspondent under a mountain of words. France must be victorious, and the Doctor launches his penny "Victory" with the utmost confidence, since even in times of peace he will have the victories of science and skill to chronicle. He professes, first and foremost, indeed, to chronicle the victories of the Franco-Italian army over the Austrians: but these victories failing, he has a list of eleven other descriptions of victories of which he will be the trumpeter, including the victories of health over disease, of peace over atrocious war, of fraternal love over envious and jealous hatred. The first number (and the last) of the Doctor's "Victory" closes with the telegraph from Valeggio of the 7th of July, in which the armistice was announced! The penny "Victory" recording the triumphs of health over disease has not yet appeared. A more systematic and persevering chronicle of the Emperor's victories is that which appeared for many weeks as a supplement to the *Journal pour Tous*. Here

a sober editor contents himself with a pleasantly coloured narrative of events. But he is tame after the comprehensive Dr. Grandménil. That is to say, tame while dealing with glory; but when he bids us approach the room in Villafranca, and listen to the conversation of two sovereigns, he takes his readers firmly by the ear. These are strange times, indeed, when the doors of emperors' conference rooms are not closed against the penny-a-liners of foreign journals! The Conference of Villafranca was supposed to be a secret one, but there were ears and eyes, it would appear, in every part of the room. How Louis Napoleon made his cigarettes, his notes, the words he spoke, and the replies of Francis Joseph, are known to every five-centimes reader of France. Surely Marshal Vaillant was not listening at the keyhole with a note-book in his hand, and a manifold writer waiting for him in his tent!

When Prince Napoleon carried the treaty to Verona, the conversation he had with the Emperor of Austria was heard by the omnipresent penny-a-liner. Just one tear his Imperial Majesty dropped upon the document in which he gave up Lombardy. And then, handing the stained parchment to the Prince, his Majesty hoped his Imperial Highness would never be compelled to make a similar sacrifice. All

this, the refuse of the Russian and other journals, is part of the blouse's war gospel. The one Imperial tear touches him,—the Zouaves have made the poor Emperor of Austria cry! The French are the first people on the face of the earth! Anecdotes of the war are, of course, eagerly caught up by the five-centimes feeders of military enthusiasm. We can imagine the relish with which a Zou-Zou, lying on his stomach under his tent at St. Maur, read the following ingenious concoction from the *Monde Illustré*, hashed and flavoured by the editor of the *Journal pour Tous*:—

On the eve of Captain P.'s departure to join the staff of the army of Italy, a retired colonel (an old family friend) paid him a visit. "My dear friend," said the old man, "I don't like the Austrians since the last siege of Mantua. I was then a volunteer, seventeen years of age. One day I had wandered into the country, when I was surprised by a troop of Würmser's army, and a devil of a Croat, a major, shot me in the shoulder with a pistol. I was three months in hospital. I carried the ball to my old mother, who kept it twenty years as a family jewel. At her death I found this Croat's present, and here it is! Now, you must do me a great favour. 'Bide your time, and when you see an opportunity with the Croats, borrow a soldier's gun, and plant this in a major's shoulder. Will you accept the errand?" Captain P. took the ball and promised to do his best. He kept his word. At Montebello, when he was General Forey's aide-de-camp, he hoped several times to be able to carry out his errand. Twice he seized a gun, and twice he was disappointed. He could not come at the requisite major; so he was compelled to

content himself by cutting his enemies on all sides with his Crimean sword. He waited for another opportunity. It was written that on the great day of Solferino his mission should be fulfilled. In the beginning of General Forey's engagement our captain received orders to go with an escort, bearing a message to the left brigade. Suddenly they came across a body of Croats, separated from their regiment. "Croats!" the captain cried; "this is, perhaps, the colonel's opportunity." A gun left upon the battle-field was given to him, and he dropped the ball of 1797 into it.

His escort attacked the Croats. In the midst of the fight he suddenly perceives an officer pointing a pistol at him. Swift as lightning he raises his gun, and knocks the officer off his horse. The Croats, seeing their commander wounded, retreat. The captain jumps to the ground, and runs to the wounded man. It was a major, and his arm was broken near the shoulder.

"Major," said the captain, "you were going to kill me, and I disturbed your aim. I will have you carefully conveyed to the hospital of my division—only I must beg a little service of you." "A favour to you from me?" said the Austrian, surprised. "Yes. You must return me the ball that I put into your shoulder, and which our surgeons will extract. I must return it to an old colonel in Paris, who lent it to me. Excuse me now, major, I have orders for the right wing. We shall meet presently." And P. jumped upon his horse and galloped away on his errand.

On the morrow of the victory the captain saw the major, and received back the ball. "Those tevels of French!" cried the major, "they kill you, but they make you laugh!" After the 15th of August Colonel R. will have his bullet religiously returned to him by Major of the Staff P——

Stories of this description are honey to the bees—the workers—of Paris. With anecdotes of this flavour ingenious editors lard lean victories, till a skirmish

swells to the proportions of a general engagement. It is impossible to persuade a Frenchman that the wildest story, if it illustrates Gallic powers, is *de la blague*. The readers of the *Omnibus* read "The Zouaves in Italy," by Pierre Zaccone, from week to week, and receive the author's exaggerations as so many faithful portraits. Yet M. Zaccone's story is about as valuable as a picture of the Zouaves, as the penny "History of Italy under Austrian Domination," by MM. Ponson du Terrail and Paul de Lascaux, is acceptable as a standard history. Is it possible, with M. de la Guerronnière ensconced in the Rue Bellechasse (nibbing every pen to his master's taste), to write impartially of the war in Italy? MM. du Terrail and de Lascaux may deal with Francis the First and Charles the Fifth (and they are capable of marshalling facts with skill and effect), but they must touch the Italian laurels of the two Napoleons according to the official pattern. They must be inspired—in a police-office.

It is true that, for the moment, the blouses are not anxious to study *sou*-history. They require highly seasoned food in the torrid regions of enthusiasm to which they have transported themselves. The *Journal à Cinq Centimes* hits their case perfectly when the editor gives them a memoir

of the Duke of Magenta; when he declares in another page that he reproduces a glowing description of the French soldier from the *New York Courier and Inquirer* "with legitimate pride," and when he adds the story of "Masaniello; or, the Deliverance of a People," as a *pièce de résistance* of his cheap banquet. The American editor lays the flattering unction on in thick and solid lumps; the Frenchman gravely receives it, asserting that he can conscientiously declare it to be only a part of that which is legitimately due to him.

But the most dashing, impudent, rollicking note of triumph which the war in Italy produced, was that which was headed by a figure of a running Zouave, with his bugle to his mouth. The "Zou-Zou," as the broad-breeched pet of the Parisians is called, had at last given his name to a journal. He was to inspire printers every week. Jokes were to be made for him, and his own doings were to be told in pithy stories. His morals (ragged, it is to be feared, as his flag) were to form the bases of *mots* and apophthegms. He was to become an institution. In *historiettes*, lively and giddying as the *bâton* of his drum-major, his adventures were to be set before the world; and all for five centimes weekly! The army of Italy has had one very lively result at least—it

has produced the *Petit Zou-Zou*. The *Zou-Zou* included, of course, *bizarre* epigrams, flavoured for the camp. "Love," says the *Zou-Zou*, "is a torch that lights part of man's life. When he has seen enough, he marries. Hymen is the extinguisher of love." The *Zou-Zou's* natural audacity leads him, now and then, to a serious reflection. Here is one: —"The dreams which chance realizes are lies which tell the truth." The *Zou-Zou*, in short, comes in humble guise before us,—but I am not certain that he is not the best interpreter of the truths of the time,—of all this amusement without reflection,—of Italy delivered in threepenny numbers by Court writers, but left to shift for her liberty by Napoleon when she had given him the laurels he coveted.

The shop-windows were crowded with Chasseurs, and Zouaves, and Turcos, lithographed, photographed, or reduced to the peaceful occupation of ornamenting snuff-boxes and portemonnaies. There was a touching print in the Rue de Rivoli, where a wounded Zouave was nursed by a good sister,—and which bore this title (intended to open the pockets of the frequenters of Meurice's), "A very angel truly." Cham drew some lively sketches of the pet soldiers of the Second Empire; and the Parisian's purse was tempted by sumptuous albums, in which the Emperor and

his army were portrayed in startling *tableaux*. The *Charivari* was moderately amusing at the expense of the Italians and their lemonade. There were gingerbread crowns "de Rheims" lying in tempting baskets opposite the Tuileries. The people cared little about the quarrel between Marshals Canrobert and Niel: they soon remarked that there was not a reference to Italy upon any of the lath and plaster or wooden triumphal arches which shadowed the road of the victorious army's march.

There is not a song—there is not a cry—that will recall to the minds of Frenchmen the 14th of August, 1859. Two days of delightful show were spent; Paris was crowded; and the shopkeepers (worshippers of the Emperor) were satisfied.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GOSSIP ABOUT BOOKS.

Among the dozens of books that made their way to our *salon* table, there were few indeed that would bear close critical examination. Many were not merely harmless. They dealt with that part of social France which had better be veiled from the young and innocent.

Running over the titles of scores of these yellow or green paper-covered books, and marking the contents of some, a few of the more serious Frenchmen of the present time wonder what condition society will be in, when the rising generation has advanced to the front of human affairs, its mind saturated with the poisonous romance of the *demi-monde!*

Let us pass by these stories of women without shame, and men without principle; let us drop into our waste-paper basket, cut into a hundred pieces this copy of a Holywell street book that is now in vogue translated into French; and mark a few

volumes that have innocent amusement, and now and then a grain or two of useful knowledge in them. Barry Cornwall writes :—

> "Dip thy young brain in wise men's deep discourse,—
> In books, which though they freeze thy wit awhile,
> Will knit thee, i' the end, with wisdom."

The youth of France shun the deep discourse, and will not cool their wit, that they may gather wisdom.

M. Deschanel attracts us by a suggestive subject. The critic who pretends to be able to pass a ripe and complete judgment on the works of others, must, according to M. Deschanel, be able to take up a book, and, from the savour of it, to describe, not only the epoch in which it was written, but also the climate and the country wherein it was conceived.* His perceptive and analytical power must go deeper yet. He must describe the race from which the author sprang; the sex, perhaps the age, but "certainly the complexion, the temperament, the humour; and—who knows?—the health." To the critic who can so far complete the physio-

* Physiology of Writers and Artists (*Physiologie des Ecrivains et des Artistes*, par Emile Deschanel). Paris: Hachette & Co.

logical history of any author, from the book he has produced; the labour of eliminating his character, his education, his habits, his rank, and his profession from his printed page, will be child's-play. Since there are sapient wizards who can describe a man's character by merely examining his handwriting, why should not M. Deschanel be able to give us the colour of an author's hair from his book? He takes for his basis Plato's definition of a man, as a soul making use of a body. Then he proceeds to develope what he conceives to be the influences of the body on the mind. We ought to see the body as well as the mind of an author in his books. With this idea before him, the author of this essay on "Natural Criticism" has filled nearly four hundred solid pages with examples of literary, artistic, and musical geniuses; whose works, according to him, clearly described the external influences to which they were subjected; their race, their temperament, and their social condition. Without following the author through the wealthy list of his instances, let me dip upon him where he touches us. I am afraid that, if his French, German, and other instances have not a closer relation to the truth than his English examples can boast, his "Phy-

siology of Writers and Artists" will not greatly promote the study of "Natural Criticism." His work may enjoy a wide popularity in France, for the simple reason that he makes his native climate that where genius grows in perfection. D'Alembert said that Burgundy was the climate of mind and genius; happily situated, it enjoys a mild temperature, and receives only the kindly rays of the sun. The welcome degree of heat which makes its wines excellent, gives a just maturity to its intellects. In Montaigne, M. Deschanel sees a perfect Anglo-Gascon. His father being an Englishman, Montaigne derived his imagination, his wit, and his sensual richness from his Gascon mother, and only that which was practical, positive and egotistical in his character, from his English father. His gold was French, his alloy English.

Shakspere, we are told, without knowing anything of Montaigne's descent, stole from him, as from a relative, "by instinct." M. Deschanel passes from the effect of climate on genius, to that of sex. He quotes Maryvaux, who said, "Style has a sex, and you can detect a woman in one sentence." The author not only detects the sex, but the nationality also, of a box of the ears as well as of a book. He describes the rap which the

fair Bellamy gave an indiscreet gallant before a whole theatre. The *actrice* has narrated the incident in her Memoirs. M. Deschanel quotes the passage as one that only an Englishwoman could have written. "A Frenchwoman would never have put the incident in this form. "Remark," he adds, "that this Englishwoman is one of the most natural and sincere that ever existed, but we sniff the prudery always." For a hundred leagues round Albion that moral "*tartine* cant is on the wind." Having found "Uncle Tom's Cabin" unreadable, our theorist passes to a few more English female writers: among others, to the author of "A Life of Madame Récamier." This author, unfortunately, refers to the great mortality among women in India, on account of their too early marriages, and suggests that an inquiry should be made into the subject. This suggestion stamps the nationality of the book, according to M. Prévost Paradol, as well as M. Deschanel. The latter exclaims, "An inquiry! This is truly English. Inquiries enter so much into their customs (and we should congratulate them on the fact), that they are introduced at every turn into their literature. The finest dramas of Shakspere, his most tragic catastrophe, would not be complete without an in-

quiry. 'Quick! let the coroner be called,' even when the scene is in Denmark, as in 'Hamlet.' It has yet to be discovered whether or not Ophelia committed suicide, and whether she is worthy or unworthy of having Christian burial. At the end of 'Romeo and Juliet' there is an inquiry! At the end of 'Othello,' an inquiry! To Frenchmen this would spoil the *dénouement;* but to Englishmen it completes the truth, and satisfies the public conscience."

The age, the temperament, the character, and the professions of writers are treated, and the author enlivens his exposition with a copious supply of anecdotes, and scraps of reading. He draws his illustrations from a hundred sources, old as well as new. He skips from Voltaire to Alexandre Dumas. *Apropos* of the latter, who is supposed to have carried the stormy passions of his youth into his later life; he relates a joke made by the younger Dumas, who said, "My father is a big child whom I had when I was quite little." In another place the reader is told that M. Alexandre Dumas will relate to anybody who listens to him, that he owes his perpetual cheerfulness and brightness to a good stomach. This is in a chapter on hereditary physical and moral qualities. Herein Dr. Raspail is quoted

as having truly said that Jean Jacques Rousseau, in robust health, would have been the darling echo of his century: whereas Jean Jacques sick, was the eloquent reformer of it.

The chapter in which M. Deschanel reviews the well-known book by Dr. Moreau on Morbid Pyschology, is interesting, as well as amusing. The Doctor, it will be remembered, comes to the conclusion that genius is a disease of the nerves; Balzac having described it as an intermittent fever. The chapter on the diet and habits of authors is full of lively matter, in which not only Brillat de Savarin's celebrated book is recommended, but the reader's attention is drawn to a quaint lecture by a certain Prof. Babrius, entitled "The Influence of Wine on Civilization." M. Deschanel admits us, here and there, into the intimacy of prominent contemporaries. We find that M. Michelet rises at six in the morning, and having swallowed some coffee, works till noon. He says that the coffee sustains him. "No!" cries M. Deschanel, "it carries him away. We smell it in his style." Michelet attributes the revolutionary spirit of the eighteenth century to the introduction of coffee; and, to the use of tobacco, the cloudy condition of the French mind in these latter days.

Let English ladies judge how they are used in M. Deschanel's book. Where he speaks of musicians, he tells his readers (having first informed them that the Anglo-Saxon race has no musical qualities) "that the English, and especially English women, in music, as in morals, sing false naturally." A paragraph more, and we are dismissed with this defiance: "Tell me, I pray you," cries M. Deschanel, "who are the great musicians of England? America is even worse off. Read Alfred Assolant and Oscar Commettant." All we can say is, that if M. Assolant knows no more of America than he knows of England, the Yankees need not be disturbed by any criticism of his. M. Deschanel provides himself with a few neat bits of original ignorance with regard to us, in addition to the stock which he has borrowed from various quarters. He tells his readers, for instance, that there are days in London when people hang themselves. A footnote adds to this information that these days are during the winds and fogs of October.

Crowds of examples, all amusingly, if not correctly, presented to the reader, are, in short, grouped in chapters, to sustain the fundamental idea of M. Deschanel's essay. His object is, as he describes it in a few words, "to show that in a page, or some-

times in less, the critic may discover, from the general style and manner of a great writer, his temperament and his character; his habits and his profession; his age, and the state of his health; his social *status*, his race, his native country, his epoch, and his physical and moral climate." At any rate, M. Deschanel has produced an odd volume. If the philosophy of it be weak, it is weak chiefly through the vanity that assumes the intellectual supremacy of France in every path of knowledge, in every highway and byway of art and science. An anecdote quoted by M. Deschanel himself, describes the spirit that pervades his volume:—"The Duchess of La Ferte said to Madame de Staël, 'I must own to you, my dear creature, that I find nobody except myself who is always in the right.'"

"The Memoirs of a Kiss!" Here is a book that has, at least, a title to recommend!* It is a book for the Boulevards, to be bought after dinner at the *Librairie Nouvelle*, or the *Librairie Centrale*, carried home, read rapidly, and thrown away. It is a fantastic, frothy, uninstructive book. It is amusing here and there, but in the main it is tedious. We

* Memoirs of a Kiss (*Mémoires d'un Baiser*). Par Jules Noriac.

follow the Kiss from lip to lip, and from cheek to cheek, through centuries, and into various places. It lies in a grave, on the cheek of a murderer for years, and is disinterred by accident. It is wrecked on an uninhabited island. It passes through all grades of society, from scullion to king. It rests upon false lips and hollow cheeks. At last it finds its way to the keeping of a country wench, who gives it to her soldier lad, as he starts for the wars. The soldier is killed on the field of battle, and as he expires, he sends the kiss into the air. The Kiss, having no longer a local habitation, is tired of a *flâneur's* life in the blue ether, and writes its Memoirs—to while away the lagging hours! This is wild enough, but French story-tellers are almost at their wits' end for novelty. The *lorettes* will not twist into new combinations; descriptions of sumptuous apartments inhabited by the elegant vicious have palled of late; and M. About, with all his picturesque force, will not, we opine, collect much more material in the *Quartier Bréda*. It would seem that French writers will presently be compelled to take honest folk for sitters, out of sheer necessity. Morality, between green and yellow covers, will be a sensational novelty. Some original writer will arise and draw a faithful wife, a true husband, and young

heroes moved by honourable attachments. Perhaps he will be met with laughter and derision at first, but since everything that is new is welcome in Paris, he has a good chance of making a successful stand. Meantime, the Parisians are offered the "Memoirs of a Kiss" as an experiment. There is not a *lorette* of the modern and familiar type in it. The Kiss is not always on the purest of lips, but it does not keep bad company as a rule. M. Noriac pilots his Kiss through a series of scenes with considerable skill. He paints with a broad brush. The introductory chapter, for instance, wherein the Kiss is born, is a sketch that has the freshness of the woods in it. The portrait of the poacher is excellent. The Kiss was born in the spring, when "all Nature was singing the Marseillaise of love." From the lips of a poor country girl it goes on its whimsical journey round the world. How it travelled about the king's palace is amusingly told. The Kiss in the third chapter of its Memoirs, discourses on its fellow kisses:—

There are people in the world ignorant enough to imagine that the simple touch of the lips on a cheek or a forehead is sufficient to constitute a kiss! Can simplicity go further? Can this age of impurity, corruption, progress, and perfection, produce greater *naïveté*? Before entering on the history of my adventures, it is necessary that I should explain what a kiss,

a genuine kiss, is. The number of kisses circulating in the world is more limited than one imagines, at most there are a thousand. I speak from experience, for I have known them all in the course of my long career; we have met on many a face. "What!" you will cry out, "only a thousand kisses amongst millions of human beings who have been loving and fighting each other during the last five thousand years? It is very little; somebody, surely, must have gone without!" I am right, Madame; about a thousand. But I see you smile, no doubt thinking that you yourself have given ten times as many. I am not going to deny a truth which your crimson lips render evident. Only you are perhaps ignorant, for of course you have loved in good earnest, that in all the twenty thousand kisses you have given, there have not been above three,—well, say four,—real ones, the rest are but make-weights. You must remember that Heaven has not been lavish of good things. Without being exactly miserly, it does the honours of Creation like a thorough-bred gentleman, and that is all. Heaven says to man, "You shall have one Love"; to woman, "One youth"; to Nature, "One Sun." Kisses are the stars of love: whatever foolish people may say, the number of the stars is limited. There is one which we call the star of Venus; there is one kiss which we call the kiss of Judas. Like the star of Venus in the heavens, the kiss of Judas on earth often appears, but it is always the same kiss, just as it is always the same star.

There are ghastly scenes in this book, which, while they proclaim the power and the skill of the author, condemn his taste. The quarrel between Gouthier and his wife, because Madame will not permit her husband to go to his barber's to be shaved, is wonderfully true to life, and abounds with happy touches; but the catastrophe is revolting,

The man cuts his wife's throat, poisons himself in prison, and carries the Kiss with him into his grave. Then follow the experiences of the Kiss—under the murderer's shroud!

The journey of the Kiss on the lips of a naval officer, who was with La Pérouse; the wreck on the uninhabited island, and the life there with an English officer; are the most amusing parts of M. Noriac's strange, fantastic, and, many will say, ridiculous book. The story of the uninhabited island is full of the grossest absurdities,—but, I repeat, it is amusing. The Kiss, lying on the murderer's cheek and underground, makes the following observations:—

Many long days passed away. The roots of the trees grew and strengthened, and at last became very inconvenient to me. My position was so sad that it appeared to me impossible to be more unhappy. The source of sorrow seemed to be exhausted. However, fresh misfortunes were in store for me. The clematis appeared to have a fondness for the honeysuckle; she loved—at least I thought so—but with the tranquil love of a pale flower. On the contrary, the vigorous honeysuckle loved passionately; he struggled with all his might to entwine his branches around those of his cold beloved. But Love is blind; and in the warmth of his amorous desires, the honeysuckle scarcely noticed the skull of the unfortunate Gouthier, which he almost crushed between his gnarled roots. Sometimes horrible rumblings and cracks where heard; then how I deplored my wretched fate! To live on the buried skull of a bourgeois malefactor is not certainly an enviable position; still better that, perhaps, than to be—nothing. Suppose the

honeysuckle, I thought to myself, by continually rubbing against the skull, ends by pulverizing it! What, then, will become of me? Holding by nothing, I must surely die! If I had the happiness of believing in the theory of metempsychosis, I might indulge in a few joyful imaginings. I might see myself live again in some lovely flower or gorgeous insect. I might pass through to earth, and enter by the throat, into the soul of a nightingale! A single kiss! what could be more delicious? Unhappily, I was ignorant; and ignorance believes in nothing. The light of religion had never dawned on my mind, and now in my misfortune I had neither faith nor hope to console me. However, it was decreed that the hour of my deliverance should be at hand. One Monday—Here the reader will cry out, "This Kiss is an impostor. What! he is buried underground for fifty years, and he tries to persuade me that, after half a century, he knows the day of the week on which he was liberated." Good reader judge me neither hastily nor unkindly. Allow me to assure you that, although three feet under ground, I knew the days by their names, and could even reckon the hours. It was simple enough. When the portion of earth under which I lived was dug up, and the honeysuckle planted which caused me so much annoyance, I was not long in finding out the reason of the disturbance. From the noise overhead, the music, the jumping, the shouts of joy which reached my ears, I soon judged that the place of repose, shut for so many years—had been turned into a *guinguette*, where everybody came on Sundays, to love, to dance, to sing, to laugh, to eat, and to drink. Reckoning the days was not difficult, because at night the earth became cold. The music and gaiety were heard at regular intervals—that is to say, every seventh day, and the Sunday was the day consecrated to it, as I imagined. I have entered at length into these details, so as to be free from the necessity of giving further explanations should I again be accused of imposture during the course of this extraordinary narrative. It was on a Monday, then, at daybreak, that I heard a loud and unusual knocking above me.

The garments of a bishop are discovered; and the diggers, being anxious to turn their prize to account (the bishop having disappeared in dust), put the skull of the murderer in the bishop's mitre. The skull is worshipped by the devout, and kissed by a fair devotee! The reader will have seen by this time that the author is a bold inventor of incidents, and that there is a grim humour about his work occasionally. M. About's "Cas de M. Guérin" is not wilder than these "Memoirs of a Kiss."

From the whimsical, we push round the table to where a volume lies that is welcome, after all the blunders and libels, and absurdities of the Weys, the Assolants, and indeed the mass of the Paris *chroniqueurs*, who know no more about England than an average Englishman knows about the intimate social customs of the Ashantees. Let M. Gouraud be presented to the reader. He, at least, sees something more than coal, iron, and "spleen" in us.

In a bold work * a Frenchman calmly and elaborately compares England with the rest of Europe, —nay, places her beside all the nations of the earth,

* History of the Origin of England's Greatness (*Histoire des Causes de la Grandeur de l'Angleterre*, &c.). By Charles Gouraud. Paris, Durand.

and gives her the advantage. He reviews her history from the time of Alfred down to the signature of the Peace of Paris in the latter part of the last century; he enters minutely into the elements which went to produce the English race; he points out to his countrymen the wondrous power of the English language, as first exhibited by Shakspere; he describes the rise and fall of the Steelyard Company, and the first dawn of British commerce towards the close of Elizabeth's reign; and, above all, he ventures to advance, for the admiration of his countrymen, as the highest development of political wisdom, the institutions which we have had the patience as a people to build up, and which we have now the good sense to respect. According to M. Gouraud, the English people alone understand the spirit of freedom; while other nations interpret it as a licence to live in wild disorder. And he seems to attribute our better appreciation, to the various races from which we spring. Indeed, so flattering are the words of M. Gouraud, to English ears, that they cannot fail to please. At least, the giant strength of intellect he gives us has left us the weakness to love songs sung in our honour. Such a song, it must be confessed, trilled in French, sounds oddly to our ears:—for, hitherto, we have been accustomed to

hear only of our fogs and coals from Jules Lecomte, —of our general absurdities from Paul Féval,—and of our *décadence* from Ledru Rollin;—while Thiers has always done his best to depreciate our value in the political world. This first serious note of praise, however, will be welcome in England, as evidence that the people of France are beginning to understand our value as men, and our solid advantages as a people. Last year they learned for the first time that such things as easels and palettes are seen in England, and are used with some effect: still, they have yet to know that our merchants read and think, and that we cultivate a national literature. And such books as this by M. Gouraud will go far to remove that contempt for our practical spirit in which every Frenchman has hitherto considered it part of a polite education to indulge; while they will prove to our neighbours (who need the lesson) that the stern business of the world may be conscientiously and energetically carried on, without neglecting the refinements of literature and art.

Known already as the author of a "History of the Commercial Policy of France," and of an "Essay on Free Trade," M. Gouraud was naturally led to deal with his present subject. An enthusiastic free-trader, he sees in the free-trade policy of England one of her

claims still to rank as the first nation upon earth. He marks three eras in her splendid fortunes: the first, ending with the appearance of Shakspere; the second, closed by the death of William the Third; and the last, that in which she actually exists. These three eras are respectively described as her infancy, her manhood, and her preponderance or sovereignty. For the spirit in which the author reviews these eras,—taking up generally our commercial progress, and not that of our parliaments or our letters,—I cannot do better than refer to the Preface, by which the reader is introduced to his three pictures. After having compared England—that is, commercial England—with Tyre, and Sidon, and Carthage, and Alexandria, Venice and Genoa, Antwerp and Lübeck,—and having shown that these ancient centres of human activity were but little wayside hives, when compared with the wondrous area over which British commerce now extends,—M. Gouraud turns to contemplate Englishmen, and to describe them as he sees them at work in the world:—

What a nation! (he exclaims). Foremost in intelligence and in the application of the useful arts, she disputes the palm in other regions of activity, and carries it in some. Is this all? No. Add that this great people is free! Free! when the rest of mankind, while pretending to rival them,

can only move with anarchy, or rest in servitude. Free! that is, equally capable of discussing and respecting their laws. Free! that is wise enough to govern themselves, and to suffice among themselves for the direction of their own affairs. Other mercantile nations before England have been, or have believed themselves to be, free; but what was the liberty of Carthage, of Venice, or even that of Amsterdam, beside that of London? A word beside a reality! And then England, to the imposing material and intellectual spectacle which she offers to the world, may add a third still more striking—and undoubtedly the fairest that can be seen under the heavens—viz., the moral spectacle of a nation, that depends upon herself alone. To have a complete idea, however, of the unprecedented grandeur of this nation, we must also take into consideration that, unlike her predecessors in commerce, who never held more than the most limited moral influence over the nations with which they came in contact, she acts more than any other on the destinies, the mind, and the manners of the rest of the world. Already she is the model school for the agriculturists, the manufacturers, the navigators, and the merchants of the universe. Then, inasmuch as by reason of her immense territorial possessions there is no language so widely spread as hers, she exercises an incalcuable influence over the human mind. There are only a few cultivated spirits who, beyond the frontiers of their respective countries, read Dante or Molière; while Shakspere has readers in every latitude of the globe. And then, too, when the free press or the free tribune of London expresses a sentiment, an idea, or a vow, this sentiment, this vow, this idea makes the tour of the world. When Junius writes, or Pitt speaks, the universe reads and listens. Thanks, in short, may be given to the justice of Providence, that the people to whom this immense and redoubtable empire has been accorded can use it only to elevate human intelligence and human dignity: for their language, even in the greatest excesses of passion, is always the manly and vivifying utterance of free

men. Such is the fine spectacle which the British Empire offers to our generation.

We may fairly regard the above appreciation of England's position in the world as the fruit of the alliance; and as evidence, which we should all welcome, that intellectual Frenchmen are beginning to perceive that we are not altogether, as described by Jules Lecomte, "coal and iron." The following description of the Anglican type is a fairer view of us than any I can remember to have read in the French language :—

About a century after the descent of William, when the violence of the first years after the Conquest had begun to give way before a milder *régime*, it may be said that the great work was accomplished. It was then that a distinct type of a people appeared, which has never had its like in any age of history—and the powerful originality of which eight centuries have only served to deepen. Then appeared a race of men whose appearance, manners, and mind have remained so marvellously distinct from the rest of the human family, that at the present time an individual of it, met under any latitude, is recognized before he has spoken; in short, then appeared the English people. How admirable are the care, the energy, and the perseverance with which nature works, through centuries, at the formation of the nations which she has destined to civilize certain territories! We have here an example with which it is impossible not to be struck. In the designs of God on the progress of the human race, it is written that England shall play a great part in the development of Western civilization. For this purpose a people must be

formed—I was going to say, must be wrought—whose powerful constitution shall be capable of fulfilling the great task. What takes place? The tribes who were indigenous to this island, being too feeble for such a destiny, are conquered, driven away, or destroyed. Saxons replace them. These Saxons, being found insufficent in their turn, are invaded by the Danes. They fight with each other at first, and then melt into a common race. But even this fusion not giving a perfectly satisfactory result, the Normans arrive, whose accession realizes at last the type of the people so long sought after and expected. All this takes up an immense length of time—brings about horrible calamities, and necessitates gigantic efforts—but nothing stops, nothing moves, nothing casts down the indomitable and pitiless energy of Nature's work. She labours in the moral as in the physical world. See in the depths of the earth, or in the caves of the ocean, how rich metals—gold, the diamond, the pearl—are elaborated! The forces here at work, in analyses, transformations, and experiments, and the time expended are incalculable. And so in the moral world, when Nature has something rare to produce she exhibits the like perseverance and insensibility—the like exclusive determination to her end. She acted in this way in the formation of the English nation. She counted neither sacrifices, revolutions, nor centuries. Because, in this instance—and succeeding ages were destined to prove it—she was making a diamond.

The blood of Saxons and Normans were confounded for ever, according to M. Gouraud, upon the battle-fields of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt,—and from it sprang the English people.

In parting with the author, I have much pleasure in recommending his conscientious work to the reader. It is valuable, not only as a clear and fair

statement of the rise of commerce in England, and of the power we have derived from its extension backed by our high moral and political excellence—but also as a contribution to the historical literature of France, that will tend to raise us in the estimation of our too lightly critical neighbours.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE COST OF A LOAN.

I BORROW the following story from Philibert Audebrand as a fair specimen of a *feuilleton* story, of the "proper" class.

One fine morning Felix de Tremblay awoke and found three letters lying by his bedside. These epistles—unceremoniously written on half sheets of paper, without envelopes—ran very nearly as follow:—

"My dear Felix" (said the first),
"Don't forget that you invited me to breakfast with you to-morrow at eleven. Excuse me if I am punctual. It is five years since we have met, and I have all sorts of adventures to relate to you."

Felix recognized the signature as that of an old friend who had just returned to Paris, after a long absence.

No. 2 commenced as follows:—

"My dear De Tremblay,
"Remember that we dine together at the Trois Frères to-morrow. Six o'clock."

The writer of this laconic missive was an old brother officer of Felix.

"My dear Felix" (said No. 3),
"Our farewell supper takes place to-morrow night, at twelve, at the Café Anglais. Pray, my dear fellow, be punctual, as I leave by the first train in the morning for Havre."

This last was the effusion of a young engineer, who, having failed in everything but the manufacture of punch and lobster salad in France, was just starting to project railroads and discover mines in North America.

Felix jumped out of bed, saying to himself, "Three friendly summonses—but summonses, nevertheless. Well! I must resign myself."

He searched his drawers and wardrobe and found nothing but emptiness: he opened his purse—"Twelve shillings!" cried he. "What an absurd sum! What the deuce can one do with that?"

Everybody now and then encounters people whose existence may be called unclassified. They are, generally, men of a "certain age," that is to say, men not yet arrived at middle age, but whose hair is early threaded with silver. They can do a little of everything. They have no particular profession, having professed everything by turns. They are

half gipsy, half man of the world, and sliding continually from one part of the social scale to the other,—they have still no place in it themselves. A quick eye may easily distinguish amongst them the dead fruit of our large schools—of mistaken vocations—and, not unfrequently, of a stormy youth, slow and difficult to calm. Most of us have occasionally met men who, after having been educated for the Church, have successfully tried their career as soldiers, barristers, and diplomatists. Some, again, have been known to leave the stage for the exchange, and the medical profession for the concert room.

Our friend Felix belonged to this wandering and vagrant tribe. In 184— he left the military school of St. Cyr, and two years afterwards the army, from pure caprice.

Having at that time a small fortune, he embarked in various wild and absurd speculations, and, finally one morning awoke—a beggar!

Even then he was not daunted; and, struggling with what he termed his destiny, he began to project companies and societies, whose certain success was to be the means of again filling his pockets.

However, while waiting for millions, he lived after a careless fashion, which, perhaps, after all, was not

without piquancy; for Felix, if he possessed friends amongst the "outsiders" of society, could yet count a few belonging to more favoured classes, and even to the aristocratic world itself. Thus it was not rare to meet him, on the same day, arm-in-arm with persons whose positions in life were the most opposite. By way of amusing his mind and strengthening his resources, he had latterly started as artist, and he made the most charming little drawings and water-colour paintings. In this way he contrived to drop a few more pounds yearly into his purse—and Felix asked nothing more from art.

To return to the episode of the three letters. At the end of ten minutes, Felix again found himself contemplating his empty porte-monnaie.

"There is no doubt about it," said he. "Only twelve shillings! What on earth is to be done with such a bagatelle! Twelve shillings! when I want at the least five pounds. Can any one imagine a greater bore?"

While speaking, he continued his toilette.

"There is one thing I could do," thought he. "I could write to Darcy—'I have immediate necessity for five pounds—send it me directly if you can.' Darcy's an excellent fellow, and would think and

ponder over the means of obliging me. Finally—not having the money of course—he would write to Ernest. 'Dear Ernest, can you let me have five pounds directly? It is for a most important affair.' Ernest, perhaps, might have half the sum by him, and as he refuses nothing to Darcy, he would write in his turn to Ferdinand—'You can do me a great service this morning by lending me two pounds ten. I want it most *particularly*.' In short, this little ceremony would probably go the round of Paris before arriving at a satisfactory result. No: that plan will not do."

At this moment, while leaning over the glass to tie his cravat, his eye fell upon a visiting card carefully tucked between the frame and glass.

"Trinchard," cried Felix, "that's my man!"

He took his hat, cane, and gloves, and was on his way to Monsieur Trinchard.

Trinchard was a man of whom one says, "Take care, he's a sharp fellow."

It was hinted that he had emerged from the lowest dregs of society, and it is certain that he commenced life by buying and selling unredeemed pledges. He then became successively usurer and banker, in the first of which capacities he no doubt made the acquaintance of Felix. Since then, he had put the finishing touch to his fortune by buying some

land, and selling it the next day at an enormous profit.

On arriving at the Rue ——, Felix was shown into a drawing-room, richly rather than elegantly furnished.

The sofas and tables were handsome, but did not appear to be of the same age or family; and the Persian carpet, the bronzes, and pictures seemed to have been bought at a sale, and did not yet find themselves at home.

The attention, however, of Felix was attracted by a young girl seated at her embroidery near a rose-wood work-table. This young girl Felix saw at once must be the daughter and heiress of the banker. She resembled him, but was still uglier, and at seventeen she possessed no charm but that of youth.

Felix approached the table, and took up an album.

"Ah!" thought he, "this will serve to talk about, and perhaps may be useful in rendering my negotiation successful with the father of this ugly little girl."

Mdlle. Zélie, however, anticipated him. "While waiting for papa," said she, "might I beg the favour of a sketch—any little trifle—for my album?"

"I shall be only too happy."

Felix was soon engaged upon one of those senti-

mental subjects common to albums. It was called, "Rousseau Plucking a Violet in the Garden of the Charmettes."

When it was finished, Zélie was profuse in her praises. "It was so beautiful! she could never thank him enough," &c.

While Felix was putting his name at the bottom of the page, the door opened, and Trinchard, in Turkish slippers, flowered dressing-gown, and velvet cap, entered the drawing-room.

"What!" is it you, my dear friend?" said he, shaking Felix by both hands, and speaking with a volubility which left no time for reply. "What has become of you of late? Sorry to have kept you waiting."

"*I* at least ought to be glad, papa," interrupted Zélie, "for Monsieur Felix, during the time, has added such a charming little sketch to my album."

Trinchard examined it with the eye of a pawnbroker.

"Very pretty thing, indeed," cried he. "The old thing, eh? I wonder how many of these have passed through my hands in former days! Why, in a sale this sketch would fetch at least a couple of guineas. But talking of sales, you know, of course, De Tremblay, that I have altogether retired into

private life. I have saved a handsome sum for my little girl here, and I have now finished, positively finished. Remember, however, that I have always a trifle at the service of an old friend. But understand, no interest you know—no bore of that sort. While I think of it, can I oblige you in that way?"

"Well, to confess the truth," answered Felix, "you can oblige me extremely this morning, if you will."

"Certainly: quite right not to hesitate. How much do you want?"

"Oh, a mere trifle: five pounds."

"Five pounds!" replied Trinchard, "what absurdity! It's not worth asking for. You shall take twenty, or nothing."

While speaking he drew out a red morocco pocket book, and handed a twenty-pound note to Felix.

"Wait a minute," said the latter, "while I give you note for note."

"Eh! what do you say?" cried Trinchard, with an affectation of anger—"Talk about note for note to an old friend like me? Do you take me for a Shylock? As I told you, I am no longer in business, so let there be no question between us of receipt or interest, or anything of the kind. Do you think I would take a receipt from a man who has made so

charming a sketch for my daughter? Do not annoy yourself about it, my dear fellow."

Felix rose.

"Since you are so obliging and friendly," said he, "I accept, but remember that I shall give it you back in a fortnight."

They shook hands, and after a bow to the young lady, Felix left.

"Here is a phenomenon," thought he, while descending the staircase, "a usurer forcing one to take his money without interest and without acknowledgment. I owe twenty pounds on my bare word, and to Trinchard! Well: it is a sacred debt, a debt of honour, from which I shall free myself as soon as possible."

During the fortnight, thanks to the ever-shifting variety of Parisian life, he totally forgot his promise relative to the payment of the twenty-pound note. One morning, however, the thought of it came into his mind. It arrived at a most inopportune moment, for Felix, although not wanting in good will, was utterly destitute of the more substantial requisite necessary to the fulfilment of his engagement.

"However," thought he, "it is only a fortnight, there is not much harm done; but I will certainly arrange to let him have it within the next fortnight."

The fortnight—a month—six weeks passed. "How time flies!" murmured Felix to himself, "who would have believed that two months have passed since I had that accursed twenty pounds of Trinchard. However, to-day I make a solemn engagement. Let me see—the first of June. Well: on the morning of the 16th I make a vow to send him the money."

By way of registering the vow within his own conscience, he opened a little memorandum book, in which he wrote in red ink and large letters the following words:—"Pay twenty pounds to Trinchard on the 16th, without fail."

The 16th arrived. Felix, after due consideration of his financial resources, found himself again in possession of the absurd sum of twelve shillings.

"I have done with projects," cried he, furiously; "I will make no more vows. My will and my pocket are ever at variance. Fate is evidently against me." It occurred to Felix, however, that a little present, judiciously selected, might not be without its effect at this period. He, therefore, purchased a handsome *jardinière* full of exotics, which he sent as a present to Madame Trinchard.

This expedient put him rather more at ease with his conscience, and cost him four pounds, but unfortunately his peace was of short duration, and the

month of July arrived and found him again considering the possibility of acquitting himself of his debt to Trinchard. As usual, however, after minute examination, he was obliged reluctantly to abandon the idea this time, owing, we fear, principally to his having lost, at lansquenet, various sums which he had put by to make up the twenty pounds.

Summer had passed away, and winter approached —winter, which is so trying in Paris to "genteel poverty," and which brings with it so many unforeseen expenses.

The remembrance of his debt haunted Felix like a phantom.

"I am not yet in a position," said he, "to settle this affair; but however, my dignity shall not suffer while Trinchard is waiting for his money. I shall make him a present of an imaginary day's sport."

That same evening the ex-moneylender received a game-basket, containing a heath cock, two hares, three pheasants, and six red partridges; total, two pounds ten.

Felix went to bed, reflecting on the truth of the Chinese proverb. A debt eats more than a child. However, it did not seem to him possible to alter the state of matters at present.

One afternoon, towards the end of the year, De

Tremblay happened to meet Trinchard lounging under the pillars of the Bourse.

"Ah, Felix, is that you?" cried the banker—"but how dull you are! What on earth is the matter?"

"Oh," answered Felix, "it is that undiscoverable twenty pounds which is preying on my mind."

"Come, now, that's too good," cried Trinchard. "What a trifle to annoy a man! brighten yourself up,—see life as it is—all *couleur de rose*, amuse yourself. This is *my* philosophy. Ah! by the way, of course you know plenty of dramatic authors and journalists?"

"Of course," answered Felix; "in what way can I serve you?"

"Why, it is not for myself at all," replied Trinchard, "but for my wife and daughter. They are dying to see a piece at one of the Boulevard theatres; which I believe all the world is rushing to see. Now if you will send us a box for to-morrow, you will gratify them and me beyond measure."

"For to-morrow? Certainly," replied Felix, "you shall have it; I pledge myself."

De Tremblay wrote to the author of the piece, his intimate friend. "A box for to-morrow without fail, *before four*."

"You shall have it," answered the dramatist.

The morrow came—four o'clock arrived—but no box. The author had evidently altogether forgotten his promise. Felix called a cabriolet—went to the theatre, and took a box, which cost him two guineas. Two guineas is not a large sum, nor did Felix hesitate; but he found it rather difficult to avoid harbouring animosity against the dramatist who had so shamefully broken his word.

"If it were not ridiculous to fight for such a cause," said he to a friend; "I would send him a challenge; but I will have my revenge tenfold."

The friend repeated this speech the next day, "in a friendly way," to the dramatist, who was from that hour a bitter enemy of Felix.

At this time De Tremblay was paying great attention to an English lady, young, pretty, and very rich. According to appearances, this was to be the *dénouement* of his life, for the lady had decidedly distinguished him from the crowd of her admirers. Unhappily, however, there was an uncle, who evidently did not see with the same eyes as his niece.

Accordingly, one day when Felix went to pay his court as usual, he learned that uncle and niece had quitted Paris the previous day for Italy. In a state

of distraction, he threw himself into a first-class carriage of the train just starting for the south.

"Gone to Italy," said he to himself. "What part of Italy? Can it be Rome, Venice, or perhaps Genoa?"

In due time he arrived at Nice, and was about to enter an hotel, when he heard himself called familiarly. He turned, and recognized Trinchard, accompanied by his wife and daughter.

"My dear friend," cried the banker, "you have come in time to do me a great service. I had just arrived here, with my wife and daughter, for change of air, when, provokingly enough, I received a letter which calls me to Marseilles for two or three days. It is an affair of the greatest importance—in fact, it involves a sum of £300. I was in the utmost perplexity as to what I should do with Zélie and her mother; but Heaven be praised! here you are, so I shall leave my treasures under your care for three days, and start at once."

It was in vain that Felix tried to explain that he, too, had an affair of the greatest importance to attend to; his astonishment and annoyance deprived him of speech, and Trinchard, without waiting for an answer, hurried off to the port, and at once entered a vessel just starting for Marseilles.

Imagine the situation of Felix, thus—in spite of himself — doomed to victimization during three days.

"And all for a miserable twenty pounds!" murmured he.

At the end of the three days—the three ages!—he regained his liberty; but to what purpose? Alas! it was too late—he had lost all trace of the charming young lady.

"There is nothing to be done but to go back to Paris," said Felix, "and, by Jove, somehow or other I will get twenty pounds, even if I coin it, to pay Trinchard."

Six months afterwards he hastened, full of joy, to free himself. As chance would have it, Trinchard had this day a dinner party, and kept Felix to join it. In the evening play was proposed, and our dear Felix had the bad luck to lose every shilling of the twenty pounds which he had intended before leaving to place in the hands of his host.

During the evening, and while Felix was under the influence of more than *one* bumper of champagne, an intimate friend of the family, gifted with all the arts of the serpent, came and pointed out to him Zélie,

surrounded by all the luxury of silver, crystal, velvet, and gems.

"All this might be yours with a word," said he.

Felix—his imagination heightened by these intoxicating words, and by the frequent draughts of champagne which he had taken to drown his annoyance—replied that he was ready to utter, not one, but a hundred words, if it were necessary.

The doom of Felix was fixed, and from that night he was destined to be the son-in-law of his creditor, who was only too pleased to give his daughter to a man of birth and fashion, and thus to better his own position in the world.

The wedding took place in a fortnight; but alas! every medal has its reverse, and the happiness of Felix has also its dark side. He is often to be met alone, pensive, and almost sad, notwithstanding his brilliant fortune.

The fact is, that he is only rich in hope, for Trinchard naturally hesitates to encumber with too much money a son-in-law who borrows twenty-pound notes and does not repay them. His wife squints and has red hair; and to these elegances adds the reputation of being a perfect Xantippe.

Meeting our poor friend the other day, he said to us—

"Heaven has blessed me with a son. Directly he can speak, I shall make him recite, after his prayers every night and morning, these words:—'Heaven preserve me always from a twenty-pound note borrowed without interest.'"

CHAPTER XX.

THROUGH THE VINEYARDS TO SPAIN.

THE Brothers Pereire have put Madrid within thirty-five hours of Paris, and consequently, within an easy fifty hours of London. An iron way has been made through and between the Pyrenees, and whole flocks of French literary tourists, note-book in hand, have set forth on their way to St. Sebastian, Valladolid, Burgos, and the capital of Queen Isabella. The French public have not been left in the least degree in the dark as to the movements of the *littérateurs* who were bidden to the banquet given to Queen Isabella's husband at St. Sebastian, and have since been turning the north of Spain into light, and exceedingly light, and personal, reading. They could not have got far out of the Orleans Railway station by the Jardin des Plantes before they had made it manifest to many persons that they were a party consisting of those terrible individuals whose mission it is to be exceedingly

clever; and who have a pen and an organ. I know that I had not got far on my way towards the Pyrenees before I heard anecdotes and rumours concerning the literary gentlemen of France who were in advance of me. The first paper from Paris I was able to buy (I think at Bayonne) admitted me to an intimate knowledge of the sayings and doings of my French *confrères*. I was anxious to see how they would endeavour to initiate the public of their country into the mysteries and pleasures of a railway journey to Madrid; and I found that they had brought a certain cheerful audacity and a comprehensive candour to their task, that would enable them to turn every inch of their journey, and every private episode of their travel, to account. When M. Albéric Second deems it of advantage to the world, to record the fact that at Madrid he lent a pair of socks to M. de Villemessant, and that others among his fellow passengers found their supply of clean linen deficient; it is easy to perceive that his travelling notes were not likely soon to come to an end. When we bear in mind that he dines every day, and that he is in the company of renowned talkers; and that he deems a description of his dinners, and reports of the conversation in which he shares, to be substantial fare for his readers; there

appeared to be no reason why his journey to the Spanish capital should not last his pen far into the winter. M. de Villemessant gives a dinner at Madrid in honour of the brothers Tamberlik, and of the *torrero Gordito*. The conversation at that dinner table is not lost to the world. We know what M. Second said to his neighbour, and what his neighbour answered, and how the evening was spent afterwards. It is on record for all time that both Theophile Gautier and Jules Simon insisted that M. Albéric Second must go to Toledo. We are masters of all M. de Villemessant said or did by the way; but I very much fear that an account of my journeying across the Pyrenees behind a locomotive, written in the style of a contributor to the *Grand Journal*, or to *Figaro*, would not prove very palatable to English readers. The prosaic English mind, unlike that of France, will not take a deep interest in the clean socks of a traveller. An English writer of travels is at a great disadvantage when, cased in Puritanic stays, he is asked to be as lively and graphic as his French rival. The French writer is accustomed to take up his lodgings in a glass house. Paris is amused with accounts of how the editor of *Figaro* drinks iced water, plays at cards in the train, and calls his travelling companions

his "dear children." Therefore, in such revelations the travelling light French writer expends—

"The essence of his phœnix-feathered muse!"

A stream of piquant anecdotes, spiced with personality, and a general tone of French superiority over everything foreign, complete the dish. The personalities, the sarcasms, the clevernesses, may provoke controversy, but then in controversy the light writer shines. It was while the Spanish custom-house officers were doing their duty at Irun, on the Spanish bank of the Bidassoa, that I got a sense of the first little difference between one of the light Paris papers and one of the serious Madrid prints. I think it was M. de Villemessant who, in order to give his readers a fair idea of the heat to be suffered in the Spanish capital, had written that at Madrid the sun was so overpowering the fowls laid hard-boiled eggs. The Spanish rebuke was stern. Only one gentleman or one guest appeared at the banquet given to the king at St. Sebastian in a white hat and travelling coat. Now, who was that tasteless individual?

Light and personal writing, it will be seen, if it saves the author the trouble of thinking very often, has the disadvantage, now and then, of bringing his manners in question. Perhaps our English method of

observing what we see, rather than of reporting what our travelling companion says, and what he eats and drinks, is the sounder and more profitable method after all; albeit the reading it produces is less sprightly and malicious than that produced by the French method.

To all classes of our travelling countrymen the way from London to Paris is as familiar as the way from Piccadilly Circus to Apsley House. The run to Dover or Folkestone, the roll and tumble across the Channel to Calais or Boulogne, and the long uneventful journey through a flat and uninteresting country to the splendid terminus of the Great Northern Railway in Paris, are among the first and commonest experiences of travellers. From Paris the English pour over the Continent east and south. They swarm in Germany and Switzerland; they winter in Nice, in Florence, and in Rome; nay, they pass into Egypt to cheat King Frost of a few victims, and some find their way to that nest in the high Pyrenees, Pau. Year after year they follow in the old tourists' beaten tracks, shaping their travels as they shape their dress, according to *la mode*. Only a few people who are at the trouble of thinking for themselves, or who delight in wild adventures, stray out of the beaten paths of continental travel. The throng go

where they may not only see, but, which is much more important to their dignity, where they may be seen. The tourist from Switzerland may be caught on the Boulevards of Paris, greatly incommoded by, but very proud of, his alpenstock. He goes about as one who should say, "Observe how I have travelled, and that there is mountain dust upon my shoeleather. I am of the great world of the superior folk who despise cheap excursions; I prefer the hotels that are crowded, the watering-places where dukes and princes abound, and the gambling-spas where vice is to be seen in the latest fashions; and lofty gentlemen lose fortunes while they smoke a cigarette." The English travellers, then, who make out tours for themselves, and reach unfrequented byways in Europe, are few even in these railway times. I was never so much impressed with this truth as when I reached the first stage of my journey, *viâ* Bayonne, into Spain. In the train, which was a very long one, there was not a single Englishman, nor did I come across an individual who spoke English until we reached the refreshment room at Tours, where an American was vainly endeavouring to make himself understood by the *garçon*. In all my travels about Bordeaux I met only two of my countrymen; and at Bayonne, albeit there is an exhibition attract-

ing crowds thither, only four or five; and about as many in that densely packed little watering place, Biarritz. I saw at once when I reached Orleans that, at any rate, I was clear out of the British tourists' route. Yet I will venture to say that it would be difficult to find out a tour more closely studded with natural beauties and points of historical interest than the country which lies between the Orleans Railway terminus at Paris and the modern capital of Spain. Between Paris and Orleans almost every mile of the ground, every vine-covered slope, and every wooded valley, is associated with important events in the history of France. Every ten minutes the railway passes some ancient château embedded in trees, or commanding the country from the summit of a hill. There is Choisy-le-Roi, now a bustling little manufacturing place by the banks of the Seine, but once famous for the château Madlle. de Montpensier, the niece of Louis XIV., built, and in which she wept over the inconstancy of her lover, Lauzun. Here, also, Louis XV. held his revels with his favourities and his mistresses, and here died one whose song of liberty has been a dirge of woe to the Bourbons, Rouget de L'Isle, author of the "Marseillaise." The wooded height beyond

is covered with two villages, Athis and Mons, where Louis XI. and Philippe le Bel dwelt, and where Madlle. de Scuderi wrote many of her romances. The country, gently undulating and covered with rich vegetation, is dotted with pretty rural houses. There is Juvissy, and it was on the hills beyond it that, in 1814, Napoleon received the news of the capitulation of Paris, and turned his horse's head towards Fontainebleau, *en route* for Elba. The railway now keeps the winding banks of the Orge in view. To the right are sloping vineyards, and to the left broad and well cultivated fields. Still we passed château after château, that of Savigny, which belongs to the widow of Marshal Davoust, and Grandvaux, Epinay-sur-Orge, the park of which was planted by Lenôtre, and the castle of Vaucluse. Then the famous tower of Montlhéry appears in the distance, crowning a hill. Many are the stories associated with this extraordinary bit of architecture. Its foundations are more than eight centuries old. Its towers have witnessed many bloody scenes, and it was from one of them that the savage Hugues de Crécy hurled the unfortunate Milon, after having strangled him with his own hands. The King of England dwelt within its stout walls in 1360, when his

troops ravaged the country to the gates of Paris. It was within sight of its towers that the famous fight between Louis XI. and the Count of Charolais took place. The remains of four of the old towers are still standing, and there is a guide ever at hand to show visitors the dark dungeons and the bones and bullets that have been dug out of the ancient castle well. These feudal ruins are on an imposing scale, and the beauty of the view from the gardens that surround them attracts many visitors who are not in the least interested in antiquarian researches. The railway now runs by the valley of Essonne, that yields Paris an immense quantity of peat, and where the powder mills of Bouchet are situated. Still castle succeeds castle on the pleasant way—Fremigny, Mesnil Voisin—the property of the Duke de Polignac; and, prettily situated in a valley, by a picturesque wood, Gille Voisin. Then the railway cuts at right angles through a noble avenue that leads to Mansard's well-known castle of Chamarande, and so on past other seats, to Etampes, an ancient town, the history of which goes back to the beginning of the seventh century, when on that ground, still called the Field of Death, King Thierry defeated his uncle, Clotaire. The town,

as seen from the railway, invites the traveller to a closer acquaintance with it. Its streets are full of historical associations. The castle, with its four towers, was the prison of the unfortunate Danish princess, Ingsburge; and was the place which Boisrodon held so long after the town had surrendered to the Dauphin in 1411. Besieged, pillaged, delivered over from one prince to another, Etampes had little quiet until, at the request of the townspeople, the fortifications were destroyed in 1590. Even this destruction did not bring immediate quiet; for it was here that Turenne attacked the army of the Prince de Condé; a plague decimated the population, and war left half the city in ruins. But peaceful commerce has long since repaired the blight of war and pestilence, and the old city is now a thriving granary, enlivened with the activity of fifty corn mills. The first object that strikes the eye of railway travellers who pass the town is the leaning tower of the old church of St. Martin, built early in the twelfth century. It is on leaving Etampes that a sudden and remarkable change in the landscape is perceptible. The line is up a steep incline, at the summit of which are vast flat lands. The prospect is not enlivened by tree or

habitation. This is the fruitful, genial country known far and wide as La Beauce. As far as the eye can reach there are flat uninterrupted fields of golden corn, or of hemp. The farmers will not plant a single tree on their land, for corn is more valuable than wood, and trees keep the sun from the ripening ears. Having traversed this rich but monotonous region, the country becomes more picturesque near the great château of Meréville. We are in the Loiret, a region that reaches to Orleans. Between this point and the ancient city are many places that are closely connected with memorable events in French history. At Angerville the traveller is reminded of the spot where the army of the Loire submitted to the government of Louis XVIII. Vineyards stretch again on all sides, and then the forest of Orleans is reached. In the distance appears the clock tower of the cathedral.

If I may estimate the number of English visitors to Orleans by the curiosity which the appearance of two very ordinary Britons awakened, I will say that a Zulu Kaffir cannot be a rarer bird of passage than a subject of Queen Victoria. Happily, we were conveyed to the hotel—a rambling, thriftless, free-and-easy place—in a closed omnibus, or we

might not have escaped with even the very considerable amount of staring it was our lot to suffer. As we entered the courtyard of the hotel, numbers of people were making their way to the *table d'hôte*. It is gratifying to remember that to one and all of these Orleanais we afforded considerable pleasure in the shape of a sudden and improvised exhibition or entertainment. They were good enough not to feel the texture of our clothes, and to refrain from pinching our flesh; albeit I am persuaded that they did not feel quite certain we were human. A *bonne* setting forth for a walk, with three or four bronzed children, turned on her heels, till she fully faced us; and then, with her broad hand stretched over her merry black eyes, she leisurely feasted herself on the strange apparition. Presently a murmur passed about the hotel—*les Anglais* had arrived. It did appear to be to the waiter and the chambermaid the richest and raciest bit of humour in the world. They were attentive enough to us; but this was natural. Were not the Ojibbeways loaded with attentions and oppressed with British hospitality when they visited London some twenty years ago? The hotel waiter was good enough to explain to us the names of some very ordinary dishes, and to tell us that the bottle

of Beaugency which he placed before us was highly esteemed in the neighbourhood, and was reckoned to have a Burgundy flavour. Our close examination in the Grand Hotel d'Orleans, however, was useful, as preparing us for the severe and constant scrutiny that awaited us in our progress through the quaint and quiet thoroughfares of the city. Old crones turned on their crutches to see us out of sight. The fruitsellers dropped their knitting needles to look at us—nay, shopwomen came to their doors that they might not miss an examination of one inch of us. By the cathedral, an old woman was hauling up an oil lamp that was slung across the road after having cleaned it. She was the lamplighter of old Orleans. Well, we appeared in sight; and she held the lamp, half swung up to its place, that she might fully feast her old eyes upon us. At some of the little windows in the cathedral there were pots of pretty bright flowers. I am certain that from behind every pot a pair of eyes were directed upon *les Anglais*. I paused by a statue, and a few open-mouthed urchins, who kept up an ominous scratching under the pointed nightcaps they wore, grouped themselves in front of me. I was, to them, a much more extraordinary work of art than the statue. I stopped before the

Prefecture, under the beaks of two gigantic gilt eagles, to mark the statue of Joan of Arc, by Princess Marie of Orleans, that stands crushed and half hidden below the doorway of the governor of the city. Some soldiers stepped across the place, from the little *café* by the theatre, to satisfy themselves as to the details of the strange apparition that was contemplating the heroic Maid of Orleans, to whom the gentle princess has given the dignity of the heroine, and at the same time the modesty of the country girl. We passed on down the great street that is named after the heroine of the city; through the broad place—where her equestrian statue dominates the scene—to the market. A brighter, a more richly coloured picture I never feasted my eyes upon—the weighty black timbers of the market roof giving broad dark amber shadows as the backgrounds of the stalls threw into vivid relief the fruitwomen in their gay clothes, and framed with piles and mounds and pyramids of luscious peaches, grapes, yellow, purple, and black, and flaming tomatos! It was then I desired—

"That force of ancient phrase which, speaking, paints."

The sun glanced, and winked, and flashed upon

the edges of the baskets, upon the stray tomato, or upon a welcome bit of greenery, leaving the rich brown shade upon the mass of various colours. Hard by the market fountain splashed, and cooled the stones where the white sunlight, uninterrupted, lay. I was the observed of every market woman who had been dosing behind her baskets till I came. The women ceased their chatter at the fountain and stared. It was one of those bits of old-city picturesqueness which are becoming rarer day by day, and I enjoyed it. I make bold to say that iron and glass will take all that is picturesque out of this corner of Orleans some of these days, and plant the tomatos, the rich yellow pumpkins, the peaches and the grapes upon model stalls, after the fashion of the great metal and glass markets that lie in dull uniformity about St. Eustache, in Paris.. Who that remembers early mornings about the old fountain of the Marché des Innocents, when the cherries and strawberries were massed upon its steps, and the full-throated *dames* were under gay umbrellas, and sees the straight lines of the present model market without a regret? But "the hour has not struck" for Orleans yet; and I would strongly recommend the British tourist to see the Orleans fruit market as it stands. Besides, there are many quaintnesses

and beauties in the old town, in addition to the known beauties of the perfectly preserved cathedral and the narrow streets of ancient houses, with the shade-giving vine over doorway and courtyard; the quiet, drowsy people, and the strange trades and trade signs, are glimpses of provincial life that amuse, at least, if they do not instruct. In one of the principal streets I saw sewing machines, and at a doorway the specimen frames of a photographer; but I always take to the by-streets of a town that is strange to me, as giving better indications of its inner life than High streets and Grandes-rues, where scraps of fashion and cheap veneer and ostentation are set forth. It is truly something to get beyond the reach of the photographer for a brief space.

The narrow streets of Orleans have many marks of age upon them. The doors are of strong timber, and the locks and keyholes are of a bygone time. The signs of trades are many, and are often quaint, and always amusing. Huge wooden models of pipes stretch over the tobacco depôts, as at Bordeaux and Bayonne, and colossal red clogs mark the abode of the shoemaker. But these are prosaic, obvious signs. They have not even the merit of the figure of the Highlander at the door of a British snuff-shop. Orleans boasts, however, some higher pictorial

flights. A blacking and brush shop takes the lead. The sign is "A la Renommée du Bon Cirage." To an ordinary mind the sale of blacking would not suggest any high classical composition. But behold! a boldly-proportioned figure of Fame appears over the blacking vendor's shop. Fame is flying, with firm pinion, over Paris, &c., and with trumpet tongue calls the attention of the centre of civilisation to the "Renommée du Bon Cirage." At the same time this herald of the virtues of good blacking bears a horn of plenty through the air, from which vast quantities of blacking brushes and blacking bottles are pouring over the devoted city. Not far from this somewhat startling sign is a wine or dram shop, over which is painted a series, in the Dutch manner, of boors carousing, card-playing, and smoking. In the same street there is an immense painting of a syren—*à la Syrène*—being the sign of a modest livery stable. Then we come upon two large boots, with an extensive family of little boots, which are the sign of a bootmaker who makes for people of all ages. Not only on account of its cathedral, then, and of the statues of Joan of Arc, is Orleans worth a visit by the tourist; it has many picturesque nooks and corners about it that well repay a stroll; and there is a refreshing, quiet, unhackneyed air about

the place that is welcome to the traveller who has been visiting show cities. For inveterate sightseers there are the house of Diane de Poitiers, that which is supposed to have been inhabited by Agnes Sorel; and finally, the house of Joan of Arc, in the Rue du Tabourg. In two or three hours Orleans may be thoroughly "done," and lunch and a bottle of Beaugency may be despatched into the bargain, at the Grand Hotel.

From Orleans to Tours the railway keeps almost uninterruptedly by the lovely banks of the Loire. On all sides there are beautiful prospects; vineyards stretching as far as the eye will reach; thick woods lying in pleasant valleys, with streams dancing in their midst; and wherever there are commanding heights or points where lovely prospects are to be had are castles, ancient and modern; some associated with the history of Touraine, others proclaiming the recent successes of financiers and speculators; but everywhere on the sloping lands are the rich and valuable vineyards, and the little towns and villages are dotted here and there, giving their names to various well-known wines, as Beaugency, Tavers, &c. In this district lies—but at some distance from the railway, and almost hidden from view—the old and celebrated castle of Cham-

bord, the park of which stretches down to the Loire. All around are châteaux; those of St. Dizier and Des Forges, for instance, not to forget that built at Menars by Madame de Pompadour, which is now in the possession of the Prince de Chimay, and is used as a school and an asylum for old people of both sexes. Nothing can be more delightful than the rich variety of the country, and the many charming houses with which the banks of the Loire are dotted, where the high towers of Blois come in sight. Blois itself is built in the form of an amphitheatre, on the steep slopes of a hill. This old city is full of picturesque nooks and corners. Its castle, its cathedral, and the garden terraces of the bishop's palace are all worth visiting. Every stone in its streets, it may be said, is associated with some episode in the history of France. It was here that the States-General were convoked in 1576, and hence the edict of Blois was sent forth. The old château has sheltered Henri Quatre and Marie de Medici. Here also the Empress Marie Louise made a futile effort to form a regency in favour of the King of Rome. Between Blois and Amboise is the finest view of the valley of the Loire. The river is, indeed, a vast lake, sprinkled with little green islands. In the distance is Chaumont,

an ancient fortress, the story of which alone would fill a volume. Just beyond Limeray, towering above the trees, is the château of Amboise, on the height where Cæsar built a great tower. To most travellers in Touraine the castle is interesting as having been the residence of Abd-el-Kader. There is little more than the castle worth seeing, for the little town is merely a commercial place, dealing in wine, clothes, &c. Not far from it, however, is the great castle of Chenonceaux—once the residence of queens—and then of the Fermier-général, Dupin, who, with his wife, received in it the *élite* of the literary society of his time, including Montesquieu, Buffon, Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Rousseau. But all this part of the country is crowded with interesting sights and little cities. What can be more picturesque than Loches, on the Indre, where is the tomb of Agnes Sorel, in a dismal little cave under the old royal palace, now the sub-prefecture. Opposite Loches is the manufacturing town of Beaulieu; and at a short distance from Amboise is the great foundry of Pocé, established in an ancient manor of this name. To the right is Vouvray, renowned for its white wines, and the château de Montcontour. Then appears Montlouis, surrounded with orchards and vineyards, on the left bank of the Loire; and then

a short ride through a rich plain, thickly dotted with pretty villages, carries the traveller into Tours, that well-known and beautiful city, whither so many of our countrymen repair to pass the winter, or to finish in peace, and amid scenes of beauty, the chapter of their lives.

Tours, the beautiful city of beautiful women, according to a monk of Marmoutier, who declared, moreover, that they were as chaste as they were beautiful and beautifully apparelled, suggests to me a few words on the sentimental side of my travels *en route* for Spain. I know that these, our neighbours, have long since written us down a cold race, who ridicule sudden expansions of the heart, and cry "shoking" when we meet lovers of the sunny south on our way. At the risk of being classed with the coldest of the cold, I must, in my character of veracious chronicler, record the feelings of subdued surprise with which I was made the observer of undisguised *tendresse* between two or three pairs, who at different points of the route got into the carriage in which I was seated. The first couple who startled me a little with their ardent simplicity were Spaniards. The lady appeared to regard the gentleman exactly in the light of a cushion, and dispose him in the corner, as she might dispose a

travelling rug. Having folded and pushed him to her satisfaction, she tied a very daintily embroidered white handkerchief over her raven hair, and, murmuring like a bee on a flower, went to sleep. It was amusing to see how the Spanish couple, having taken the initiative, were promptly followed up by an English couple who had been whispering to one another, and furtively pressing each other's hand in a shamefaced way, up to that time. I must confess that the British bridgeroom was awkward, and appeared to be disturbed in his arrangements by a constant anxiety as to whether the rest of the passengers were looking at him. But he took courage presently, and in a few minutes his bride also was asleep on his shoulder. On our way to Bayonne we were positively beset by affectionate pairs. They abound, I have had frequent opportunities of observing, about this time of the year, between London and Paris. But then the Great Northern of France has a cold atmosphere about it, and the fragments of innumerable honeymoons it witnesses are those of the circumspect English. Now, there is no French Mrs. Grundy whom French couples fear. The French lover is not put out of countenance because you see that his lady's hand is resting in his. The lady will tap him on the cheek

with her fan, play with his gloves, or put a *bon-bon* between his teeth with the most charming *abandon*. By day mutual attentions appear to take the form of constant offers of light refreshment. At a station between Orleans and Tours a couple, whose honey-moon must have long since faded away, exhibited their constant affection by tempting each other, at intervals of five minutes, to fragments of the contents of a capacious basket that appeared to contain inexhaustible quantities of peaches, grapes, and *brioches*. The mode of consuming these delicacies was not always of the most refined imaginable. But the freedom from affectation gave a certain grace to the lady, even when she took her wine by tilting a black bottle. Her charms appeared to suffer no abatement in the sight of her husband when, after having consumed a juicy peach, she carefully sucked the fingers and thumbs which had held it. There was always a refreshing naturalness, in short, about the passages of sentiment it was my fate to witness on my journey to the Pyrenees. "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*," our sentimental companions said to us; "and it is passing strange that you English who wear this motto on that proud and noble order of yours should be so prim, and shamefaced, and awkward, and button up your affections as though

you would be very much confused if athird person should discover that you had a heart beating under that *bizarre*, insular tailoring of yours."

The way from Tours to Bordeaux is, if possible, more delightful and historically interesting than that from Paris to Tours. Leaving Tours, its cathedral, its grand amphitheatre, the charming *Mail*, its walks by the banks of the Loire, the chateau of Plessis-lez-Tours, made famous by Quentin Durward, and that extraordinary manufactory of school prizes, known as Mame's, which, it is said, can turn out 15,000 volumes, of ten sheets each, in a day; not forgetting the admirable reformatory of Mettray; the traveller proceeds over the fine viaduct of Grammont, seeing beneath him a magnificent panorama watered by the Loire and the Cher, which run here in parallel lines. Hence the railway traverses the valley of the Indre, and passes feudal castles to the right and left that have each their wondrous stories of the days gone by. By the Indre is the old castle of Montbazon, and near it is Conzier, where Marie de Medici was reconciled to her son, Louis XIII., in 1619, and where De Rancé, who reformed the order of the Trappists, found the Duchess of Montbazon lying headless in her coffin. Through alternating vineyards and woods, to Villeperdue and Sainte

Maure, by a viaduct over the sweet valley of Mance, past the irregular château of Brou, the railway reaches the valley of Vienne, with its pretty, thickly wooded slopes. The landscape is still dotted with ancient castles. There is that of La Fontaïne, near Daugè, and of Valençay, near Aingrande. Châtellerault, one of the chief towns of the department of Vienne, is often visited for its great manufactory of small arms and swords, which supplies the French army. From Châtellerault the railway describes a wide curve to reach Poitiers, by the forest of Châtellerault and the valley of the Clain. We are still in a great wine country. Here is Dissais (dominated by its fine château of the fifteenth century); that has a good reputation for its red wine. Poitiers is a neglected but picturesque and historically interesting old city, with many a remarkable relic of the stormy past in its narrow winding streets. Here was fought the battle of Poitiers. On this spot Calvin preached, and there is a grotto still called after him, where he is said to have assembled his disciples. The cathedral, the churches of St. Radegonde, and Notre Dame La Grande, the ruins of the palace of the old counts of Poitou, and the old crumbling walls, tempt many an antiquary to make a halt. On the way from Poitiers to Angoulême

the railway passes through many interesting and picturesque spots. There is a room in the tower of Ligugè, which is said to have been inhabited by Rabelais; corn-dealing Vivonne claims notice as having been the birthplace of the celebrated Marquise de Rambouillet; Vérac is known for its chestnuts and its mules; Civray, that sells corn, and truffles, and chestnuts, and cattle; Ruffec, that has given its name to world-renowned partridge and truffle pies; Vars, whence Hermitage and Roc de Vars; and so, through deep cuttings, through charming landscapes covered with vines, chestnut trees, and orchards, we reach Angoulême. Imposingly built on a height, and surrounded with ramparts and gardens, Angoulême is encompassed with fine meadows, and with factories and mills; and commands the beautiful valley of the Charente. It is an old historical place, with its cathedral, and castle, and religious relics. It still flourishes by its great paper manufactories and its coarse textile products. The country between Angoulême and Bordeaux is in many parts poor and uninteresting; but here and there appears a valley or a vast plain, where fruits, and cereals, and grapes grow in abundance. As we get south, the vineyards become broader and more numerous, and the railway passes

by the rich vintages of the Bordelais. St. Emilion, that has given its name to a favourite Bordeaux wine, is a city of ruins. Immense artificial grottoes made in the rocks round about the town, shelter this famous wine. In some of them numbers of poor people live, many of them living by working in the black quarries at hand. The vineyards abound from this point to Bordeaux. The recollection of the run from Paris to this great city on the Garonne is in all respects most pleasing. The scenery has been most various through miles of vineyards, through golden orchards, past green valleys thickly dotted with cattle, by many an ancient castle and keep, with frequent halts at the prettiest imaginable stations, built like Swiss châlets, and almost buried in flowers. Our fellow passengers also have been lively Southerners, full of animal spirits and politeness; but now and then a little overcharged, it must be confessed, with garlic. In the train with us, from Tours to Bordeaux, were about 150 young conscripts, who sang choruses, and joked, and capered about every station at which we stopped. Each man had his little bundle of clothes, and, as a rule, a formidable clump of dark bread stuck on the end of his walking-stick. The troop became very boisterous, as the train swept over the broad flat plain, dotted

with little white houses (which in the distance looked like lumps of white sugar) that forms one of the outskirts of Bordeaux.

Bordeaux has streets in it that may be compared with the best thoroughfares in Paris. Her quays are broad; her commerce is great and flourishing; she has always a noble fleet of ships from all parts of the world upon the yellow waters of her beloved Garonne; her squares, and *places*, and walks are nobly proportioned; her theatre is an edifice that Paris cannot outmatch; the houses, the hotels, the *cafés*, the shops, give the visitor a sense of ample space and plentiful elbow-room. The passages are broad. There are no mean and dismal contrivances for turning every square inch of room to account. The quays, in short, are a fair indication of the spaciousness of every part of this flourishing city. This spaciousness, that leaves the air free to circulate through streets and houses, enables the autumn traveller to bear the heat that blazes upon Bordeaux in August. It is here that he catches many indications of his approach to the south, and of the manners and customs of the south. It was about six o'clock in the morning when I crossed the noble bridge that spans the Garonne, on my way to my hotel. The bridge was gay with countrywomen,

who were carrying produce to market, on their heads. At the water fountains, *bonnes* and cooks stood with large earthenware vessels poised upon white cloth pads, that were fastened upon their heads. The grace and the agility with which they carried these vases of ancient make, belong to the south, and suggested groups by wells under burning skies. The stalls opposite the busy quays also suggested the heat the mid-day sun would throw upon us. The old fruit-women were in broad, burnt straw hats, and under thick umbrellas of great circumference. Their stalls were loaded with quantities of luscious grapes and peaches, and cool drinks in bulky earthenware vessels of rough and barbarous make. They drove a fair trade betimes, for the sun has not long peeped above the horizon before the quays are alive with men, and those long and primitive vehicles in which merchandise is carried from the ships to the *entrepôt.* The red wine casks, with bungs as red as tipplers' noses, are being rolled into long rows, and undergoing examination, and receiving mysterious marks. The English colours fly from many a noble mast-head; English colliers are unloading, and amid the dancing, chattering, laughing, gaily dressed crowd that is seeing a steamer off on its way to Rochefort, and making more fuss than would attend the de-

parture of a British ship for New South Wales, stand a few English sailors, with their arms akimbo, smiling at the scene; and in their heart of hearts feeling a little contempt for skipping and chattering *Mossoo*. The centre of loitering, lounging, coffee and absinthe drinking, and newspaper reading; is round about the great theatre and along the Allée Tourny, in the midst of which stands the equestrian statue of Napoleon III., erected in his honour by grateful Bordeaux. There were one or two faded wreaths, bouquets, and flowers within the railings, under the memorable words, "The empire is peace," when I passed it. Bordeaux is not a show city, albeit it has much to show. There are some fine pictures in its old cathedral, and there are some exquisite stained windows in the Church of St. Michel. The old quarters of the city, where the sailors and the hawkers, and the bric-brac shops are; where the jutting corners of houses are filled in with cobblers' sheds or old clothes places, and where the grapes and melons lie for sale upon the ground, supply a picture at every step. What can be more quaint, and picturesquely broken up, and rich in shades of grey, for the background of the brightly dressed men and women (the women with their *foulards* coquettishly tied at the side of

their heads, and the men with the bright blue or crimson *beret*), than the corner of the *place* or yard of the cathedral, which is given up to the sale of old shop and other signs? In this part of the city a turn in the street will bring you upon a block of old houses, or a ruined gateway, or a tumble-down wine shop, with gigantic oleanders flourishing at its threshold. In this part the streets are crowded with loungers, who one and all appear to regard the entrance of an Englishman upon the scene, as a highly amusing break in the monotony of their existence. I met only two Englishmen in my wanderings through the streets of Bordeaux. This is not on the beaten track of British tourists. Yet it is a fair and prosperous and a brilliant city, on the direct road to places that should be more attractive still, to the tourist. There is a holiday look about it, especially round the theatre and under the great tent in the open air, where the richer classes of citizens drink their *bock*, and read their paper. The market is a series of pictures under gigantic umbrellas. The sailors are mostly Southerners, and dress and group themselves in a manner delightful to the eye of the colourist; and in the Lycée is not Montaigne buried, and has he not his statue here? On the way to the Southern Railway

station the student of the picturesque has good opportunities of catching the seafaring population in their free moments, at their grog or beer shops, *à la descente des Pyrénées*, or at *le Gascon*. Of signs, I may remark that Bordeaux does not yield in the boldness and originality of its shop adornments, to Orleans. It was early in the morning, after a breakfast of grilled *voyans*, that I set out for Bayonne. *Voyans* are very closely related to fresh sardines—first cousns at the very least. They take their name from a place called Voyant; but they come from that gem of a watering-place, Arcachon: and are held at Bordeaux, to be superior to the sardine.

Between Bordeaux and Bayonne lie those many miles of desert, and swamp, and fir, and furze—whence the wolves have not been driven; where the wild fowl are in mighty numbers; and which abound in treacherous quagmire and fever-breathing waters; known as the Landes. For a few miles after leaving Bordeaux we travel through some sunny vineyards and orchards covered with glowing fruit. But soon the pine forest is upon us, and we are in the Landes: and for 70 miles—ay, for more than 70 miles—shall we now travel through silent, dreary, monotonous, flat forest, seeing little or no

underwood; and then, by the hour together, across miles of marsh and brown rank vegetation, stretching in all directions, as far as the eye can reach. At long intervals we pass a battered shed that looks like an old covered cart, with the wheels off, dropped in the wilderness. It is a shepherd's hut, into which any poor belated shepherd may creep, who happens to find himself near it at sundown. All the passengers who have not travelled in this direction before, sit at the carriage window looking out eagerly to see in the life, some of those strange peasants of the Landes, perched upon high stilts, whom they have wondered at in pictures. They look out, however, for a long time in vain; for the flocks are few. I contrived to catch a glimpse of two figures in the half distance, that looked like storks taking gigantic strides; but which, on nearer examination, I found to be men tending two flocks of poor, lean, undergrown-looking sheep. It was impossible not to feel profound pity, seeing these men in a boundless waste, where the bog was too treacherous for the human foot to trust itself; doomed to pass days and nights alone and in silence, with any shed that might be nearest when darkness came upon them, to sleep in. During the temperate weather these stilted shepherds sally forth into the

flat and pathless wilderness with their flocks, and remain away from their humble homes for weeks; returning home only to replenish their store of food. They are a simple-hearted primitive race, as the reader may well imagine; and have their ancient marriage and funeral customs handed down to them from many generations past and gone. These are beginning to suffer from the contact of civilization, and from the influence of that railway which enabled me to take a peep at them. These gentle shepherds while away the hours in the desert by knitting.

The Landes peasants who do not tend flocks, keep to the pine forests. Their work is to be seen on every tree that is of more than fourteen or fifteen years' growth in the forest. They tap these trees by making long cuts in the bark, and leaving a reservoir to collect the resin or turpentine that flows from it. These earthenware reservoirs, which are fixed to the sides of nearly all the fir trees in the forest, look like lamps attached to them, as if in preparation for illumination. The railway has added to the value of this resinous produce, and at the little stations there are indications of nascent industries that are probably destined some day to people the Landes with an active-minded and prosperous population.

It was at Morcens, where there occurs a limited oasis in the desert, and where a *table d'hôte* is served to the railway passengers, in open air; that two very acute young gentlemen, whom I found to be clerks of two commercial houses in Bayonne, got into the carriage where I was seated. They had been on business, looking up cattle, or arranging the sale of timber, at one of the little villages in the Landes. They represented houses that are busy taking advantage of the changes the railway, and the protection and initiative of the Emperor, are beginning to effect in the swamp and the forest. These young gentlemen looked out upon the forest, upon the waste, and even upon the blooming heather that now and then appeared in abundance, as into a shop-window. The heather, they said, produced very fair honey, but not so good as that of Narbonne. Clerk No. 1 "did" in wool, while clerk No. 2 represented timber and turpentine. The first had a great deal to say about the losses that had been made this year, in the Spanish valleys by speculators in cattle; while the shrewd young representative of timber and turpentine gave glowing accounts of the money people were beginning to make by buying up, and planting out, in the neighbourhood of the Landes. The two discussed with great warmth, the exact quantity of tur-

pentine a pine thirty years old ought to yield in a year. They were of the band of young gentlemen who are about to break in upon the patriarchal life of the peasants of the Landes. They had the wages of the forest workmen at their fingers' ends. The budding woolstapler asked his companion what the use could be of all the turpentine the forests yielded? The timber merchant answered that he did not know, but large quantities of it went to England; to his mind evidently to serve some eccentric purpose in that eccentric country. We presently reached Dax, the old capital of the Tarbelli, the Roman remains of which are well known to antiquaries; but which is interesting to the modern mind rather for the exquisite hams it sends forth with the name of Bayonne tacked to them. Dax is a busy place, through which much of the rich produce of the valley of the Adour passes, and which has a reputation for its fine *liqueurs*, and is also a large depôt for the merchandise that is exported from France into Spain. The country between Dax and Bayonne, which forms the outskirts of the sterile Landes, gradually assumes a rich and fertile appearance. Ere the railway enters upon this more favoured country, it passes through a broad expanse of land that is black as coal. One

of the young clerks directed our attention to this dismal region.

"That," said he, "is where the great fire took place lately. Some sparks from a locomotive set the whole country here in a flame, that spread for miles. A pretty sum of money it will cost the company."

Not a stump, not a blade of grass was to be seen. The whole surface of the land was one charred mass. Not far beyond this, the deep blue line of the Pyrenees came in sight—on our left; and by a rich and pleasant country, dotted with bright summer residences, surrounded with gardens; and the broad blue Adour sparkling in the fierce sun on our right, studded with white sails of small craft; past fields where peasants were gathering crimson tomatos, we sped on gently into the Bayonne Railway station.

We at once felt that we were in the warm south. The ragged porters and tattered urchins outside the station, were like so many groups of Murillo's sitters. They spoke an incomprehensible *patois*, and on all sides Spanish was to be heard, intermingled with French. There were Spanish ladies in mantillas, and French ladies in extravagantly

ornamented hats. There were swarthy Dons and Parisian dandies, dressed out for Biarritz. There were elegant little phaetons, the horses covered from head to tail with richly worked netting; and there was a company of the line, with four or five officers, in waiting to receive the conscripts, who had been singing in the third-class carriages in our rear, all the way from Bordeaux. Their holiday and their singing were at an end now, and they looked serious enough when they were drawn up in line opposite the station, and marched off through the massive fortifications—to barracks. I saw a file of them, later in the afternoon, wending their way, from the depôt, each with his bedding on his back. They were a poor draft of conscripts, who could not have many sous in their pockets to pay their first footing among their companions in arms, and would not consequently be very welcome. The castle and fortifications of Bayonne, built on a rising ground commanding the broad waters of the Adour and the Nive at their junction, have an imposing aspect from St. Esprit—once a distinct town, and now a Bayonne *faubourg*. The town is a gay and bustling one—half Spanish, half French—and the narrow streets of the old part of it, are crowded with quaintly dressed fruit-

sellers, fishwomen, and seafaring people; and with the grave Basque peasants leading their oxen by the majestic waving of a long stick, hither and thither at a slow and solemn pace. The cathedral, with the fruit and poultry market round it; the Rue du Gouvernement, whence the Spanish diligences started before this new railway had been pushed through the Pyrenees; the Spanish hawkers, who look like seedy representatives of the Barber of Seville, selling knives and gaudy Castilian shawls, and flaunting *foulards* to the loungers at the *café* by the theatre; the merry equipages, with their silver bells, coming in from Biarritz and from other pleasant places round about; and the crowds of dark-eyed Spanish ladies, in their looped dresses;—with the long range of the Alps that may be seen from the high ground of the shady walks that skirt the city—make up a scene which must afford the most hackneyed tourist a few new pleasant sensations. The way in which the peasants lead their patient oxen, yoked to carts of the most primitive construction laden with corn, is an amusing study. The men take the greatest care of the patient animals. Their entire body is tightly covered with canvas; a sheepskin protects their heads, and tassels dangle round their eyes, to

keep the flies off. Their master delights to treat them to dainty bits of herbage, and he guides them through the streets with the slightest touches of his long stick. He walks before them with a proud step, and is himself a picturesque object, with his blue *beret*, his red band round his waist, and his flowing linen sleeves. The little exhibition of Spanish and French Industry gave an extra holiday appearance to Bayonne while I was there; but it was when the French and Spanish Orpheonists arrived, that the city assumed a thoroughly holiday appearance. The people were astir, and the rival bands were playing, soon after five o'clock in the morning. The musical societies came from various towns round about, preceded by flowing banners, and dressed in the strangest costumes. The excitement was intense when they all met at the Marie, and were received by the municipal authorities. The hotels were crowded, and I deemed myself fortunate in securing a bedroom at a third-class Spanish hotel, up a stable-yard, and immediately (as my nose incessantly reminded me) over the stables. The attentions usually expected in an hotel were out of the question in this. Visitors were treated in a familiar, free-and-easy manner. It was too hot for ceremony. Everybody appeared to do exactly the

work they pleased, and at the moment they pleased to do it. People sat under doorways wherever there was a bit of shade; and every tenth person, down to the babies in arms, appeared to be munching grapes. The most active-minded person in the town was a man who was incessantly driving some 18 or 20 milch goats about, and crying "Fresh milk." The peasants had flocked in from the country, and gravely stalked about with sticks as long as themselves. There was no lack of music anywhere. I was awoke soon after sunrise by a stable-boy under my window, who was beguiling himself with the march from "Faust." It was in all respects a merry place, and under that deep blue sky business seemed to be conducted as a matter of intense pleasure. The flies made the only care I felt in the place.

Southey reports—"It has been said of our neighbours that, throw a Frenchman into the sea naked, and he will rise up clothed from head to foot, and with a bag, sword, and pair of ruffles to boot." Has Biarritz been built and populated to prove this report true? This is a little bathing-place on the Gulf of Gascony, hemmed in by sea, with formidable rocks, over which the Atlantic billows incessantly thunder; with a little fisherman's port, no bigger

than a swimming-bath; hard by, the Pyrenees, in the neighbourhood of the proud and primitive Basque peasantry; and yet, what is the picture it presents to-day? People come hither for a dip in the sea; and we find them on the shore, on the Casino terrace, or on the sands by the Villa Eugénie, in two or three different costumes in the course of a day. In order to arrive at a notion of the number of costumes that are necessary to make a fair appearance at Biarritz, the observer has only to watch the unloading of the *calèches*, and *diligences*, and omnibuses, that rumble through the one street, from morning till night. The ladies' trunks are of colossal proportions. I saw one Spanish family leave *en route* for Madrid. There were three ladies, the husband, and two boys in company; and there were nine boxes, five of which were, I will say positively, the most gigantic specimens of the trunkmaker's art it has been my lot to behold. Having seen the manner in which Parisians and Spaniards rusticate at Biarritz, and in what splendid costumes they are wont to climb the rocks and drive to Cambo and St. Jean de Luz; I was not so struck with the dimensions of the Spanish family's luggage as I should have been, had I seen it at Ramsgate, or Hastings, or St. Leonards. The unlucky wights, or still more

unlucky ladies, who should repair to Biarritz in the ordinary, simple out-of-town garments which are deemed becoming at an English watering place; would feel themselves to be in a pitiable plight directly they appeared on the sands. I have seen groups like the Biarritz groups of ladies, through an opera-glass on the boards of Her Majesty's Theatre. The short skirts; the petticoats embroidered in all the colours of the rainbow; the extraordinarily contrived jackets, of every conceivable hue and pattern; the feminine Hessian boots, with gold or red tassels; the hats loaded with ornaments; the wildly eccentric dresses, of one flaming colour; and all of the very richest and costliest materials, make up the Parisian idea of dressing at a watering-place. Even in the water, these simple children wear highly trimmed dresses—and the cherry ribbons from their straw hats are soaked in the salt sea. The men keep the ladies in countenance. The *gandins* from the Boulevards are in brown or black velvet, with patent leather knickerbockers, and the most unexceptionable gloves; and they carry white umbrellas, lined with green, for the good of their complexions. Every summer traveller from London to Madrid must devote a few hours, in short, to Biarritz. It is the prettiest little toy-place imaginable. The

sea foaming over its rocks; its charming villas perched up on the high points of the broken ground; the pretty High Street, with shady trees along it, and the perpetual fair that is held under them; the sardine women, who come running into the town from St. Jean de Luz, with their flat baskets of fish upon their heads; and the romantic walks by the sea, make Biarritz a most charming as well as a most amusing place. From it holiday-makers can contrive excursions into the many beautifully situated villages of the Lower Pyrenees.

A diligence takes the traveller from Biarritz to the new railway station of La Négresse, which is about two miles off. It is from this station that the way lies through the lower range of the Pyrenees. The station is not yet finished. Even the clock was not up when I first went to it; and certainly the young lady who was moneytaker had not learned to do her business with that rapidity and precision which are the characteristics of French female railway moneytakers generally.

We were off, at last, for Spain; and sped at a fair railway pace towards the blue mountains, with the Bay of Gascony on our right. As the great mountains seemed to be rising out of the earth; as the bold granite outline of the Rhune and the Mon-

darain showed their rugged sides more distinctly every moment; and as we caught a peep at the Three Crowns that dominate the Spanish Basque provinces beyond; the train dashed through deep cuttings in the slanting strata of the mountain rock; flew along an embankment of giddy height; then shot round the ledge cut in the side of a mountain; with a wall of granite on the right, and a precipice on the left! Peak after peak, hill after hill, came in sight. Now the train wheezed and creaked up a steep embankment; and now, with a shriek, it plunged into the bowels of the earth. A more beautiful and exciting ride than that from La Négresse, past St. Jean de Luz to Hendaye, the last station in France on the French bank of the Bidassoa, it is hardly possible to conceive. The grey and bare mountain tops; the green and pleasant valleys, scattered thickly over with white cottages; the winding paths up the lower mountain ridges, that looked like white thread upon them; the rich varieties of vegetation; the flowering firs, the vast expanses of ferns (like feathers of flame), and the clouds lying gently upon the higher summits, and hiding them, absolutely bewildered the sight with their great and various beauties. Here, by the mountains, and by the sea also, is old St. Jean de

Luz—that has so many stories of historic interest within its walls. It is encompassed with fields of maize and scraps of forest. Its bright coquettish houses seem to bid the traveller welcome from afar.

The railway crosses the pretty Bidassoa, and we are in Spain. The line gives evidence of its newness every minute. There is only a single line of rails yet down. Bands of men are still working at the cuttings. The tops of the fences are still bright from the recent stroke of the hatchet. The telegraph wires lie in massive coils by the roadside; yet so prodigal is nature hereabouts in the valleys, that she has already spread gardens of flowers along some of the cuttings. In a few minutes we are in the first Spanish railway station; and in the midst of brown-coated Spanish soldiers, and strange-looking gendarmes and unfamiliar custom-house officers—who are all in the service and livery of Queen Isabella. We change carriages; and, leaving the Southern Railway of France, are transferred to the carriages and lines of the Northern Railway of Spain. While we were congratulating ourselves on the fact that Frenchmen and Englishmen freely enter and pass out of the Spanish territory now-a-days, without hindrance or trouble in the shape of

passport, a Frenchman got into our carriage, threw up his hands, and exclaimed, "*Quel pays! quel pays!*" He requested us to figure to ourselves that he had absolutely paid an *ad valorem* duty of 40 per cent. on some of the contents of his luggage. They had the impertinence to tell him he was let off very cheaply into the bargain. The excited Frenchman was not pacified by the remark that he had made a blunder in not booking his luggage through to Madrid, since by this means he would have been saved the annoyance of an interview with Spanish custom-house officers at the frontier town of Irun.

The first proof the traveller has of his arrival in a Spanish railway station is—the cigarette in the mouth of every man he sees. The gendarme is enjoying one under his preposterously large cocked hat; the porters are sending forth eddies of smoke; the soldiers are blowing their little clouds; nay, the ragged, laughing, chattering touters, who clamour after the strangers bent on sightseeing, smoke while they beg for custom. I expected to see the copper-coloured nurses rolling cigarettes for the babies. Regulations against smoking in this country! As well might there be regulations against breathing, or against the fumes of garlic. Where garlic is

permitted, would it not be a refinement of cruelty to banish the fragrant weed? It requires courage to get through a crowd without holding a handkerchief to the nose. Not even in the first-class carriages (in which it is pleasantly said by our vivacious neighbours that only princes, Englishmen, and fools travel) is freedom from this same garlic obtained. The hotels appear to be soaked in it. It exudes from walls, and rafters, and furniture. It startles you at the corner of every street. Ask your way, and your polite informant almost strikes you to the earth with it. The people have a habit of keeping their windows closed in summer as well as winter, lest some of the precious fumes should escape. When they see the windows of a house thrown open, they conclude that "the English" live there. They travel through a red-hot day with the windows of the railway carriage in which they ride, hermetically sealed. It is then that St. Garlic assumes his power, and dominates the scene. He fills every pore, soaks into every garment, anoints each particular hair. He will not give one minute's truce. His votaries—his disciples—curl themselves in their strange travelling gear, and fall asleep to dream of, and breathe him. His opponents—the unbelievers in him—shall be pun-

ished now. Let them wince while the faithful repose, and snort and snore in honour of St. Garlic! The dogged children from the north chafe and fret and curl the nose; they leave the *salle-à-manger* where St. Garlic has set up his shrine; they throw away the *pain fourré* they had hoped to enjoy, because St. Garlic has breathed his spirit therein—but they must submit, or turn their faces from the south. The south without garlic is not to be had. I made up my mind to this at Bordeaux—where I breakfasted in a dining-room that was simply a bath of garlic. I stirred my coffee with garlic; I spread my butter upon my bread with it; the money with which I paid my bill were so many shining lumps of garlic. But that famous Bordeaux shrine of St. Garlic was a let-off, a place of ease and comfort to the British nostril; when compared with a compartment of a night train, on its way to the Spanish Peninsula. The garlic here penetrates to the marrow of the bones. I vow and declare that hundreds of travellers would be grateful to the South of France and North of Spain railway companies, if these would run carriages marked "garlic," and specially set apart for the disciples of St. Garlic! Inasmuch as London to Madrid now bids fair to be a popular

British excursion; and as the British are a *bizarre* race, whose degree of civilization is still far below that at which St. Garlic finds worshippers; it would be a generous and enlightened concession to our insular prejudices, if carriages were set apart marked as I have suggested. As the case stands, the cigarette smoking is an act of mercy.

There are many other startling matters to which the traveller by the Pyrenees must perforce accustom himself. Manners hereabouts have not

> "that repose
> Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere."

Ladies and gentlemen spit freely. One is surprised not a little, in good *table d'hôte* society, to see how frequently a gentleman's nose is the object of his marked attention, and how prominent, and to the uninitiated, how dangerous a part the knife plays in the conveyance of food from plate to mouth. We must look very stiff in the midst of these people. I was breakfasting at the oyster beds of Biarritz (where the oysters are taken out of the sea and opened before the consumer) one morning. There were ladies of some degree about. Near me an ancient gentleman sat, consuming a large crayfish. He was waited upon by a southern damsel, with the

Spanish blood mantling through her clear, brown, plump cheeks. They talked freely, and joked and laughed, naturally and openly, as though the sweet fresh air impelled them to be gay. Presently a Spaniard in a light chocolate suit of tights, came winding and skipping down the rocks—laden with the bright fabrics of Castille. These he spread before the young waiting-woman, who eyed them fondly, put some of them against her cheek, and invited the old gentleman's opinion. He gave it freely and unaffectedly, and helped the damsel to make a bargain with the Spaniard for a *fichu*. It was concluded after a long and animated parley, and then the gentleman courteously offered a glass of wine to the pedlar. When I noticed the old gentleman a few minutes later, he was paternally smoothing the eyebrows of the waitress while she counted his change upon the table. I protest that there was nothing more than innocent gaiety in all this. The old man's heart, like that of the waiting-maid whose brows he smoothed, was light, not bad. Nobody frowned nor tossed their head, nor called the girl a forward minx. So, in Spain, there are scenes in the streets which appear to the British mind to belong essentially to the house.

On entering Spain the railway traverses an exqui-

sitely rich and picturesque valley. The orchards glow with their burden of rosy apples; the railway cuttings are through brilliantly tinted strata; the cottages are dazzling white, and are perched in all kinds of impossible places; the railway women, who guard the gates at level crossings, are so many sitters for Phillips. One, who motioned the train forward, with an attitude full of dignity, was dressed in a chrome-yellow petticoat. Her legs were bare, and upon her head was a broad straw hat. And so, through rich and rare landscape, we sped on to St. Sebastian. By the way, and near the celebrated old town, is a bit of loveliness, made up of mountain, lake, and tumbling sea, and deep blue sky, it would be difficult to match, I fancy, in any part of the world.

The railway skirts a blue lake, upon which tiny craft with white sails, float tranquilly as swans. In the distance, for background, are two wooded mountains, with a dark ravine between. At the base of the mountains, spread along the edge of the blue lake, is a group of houses fantastically painted. The air is so clear, their lines are sharp as the lines of a cardboard village. Between the mountains, carrying the eye through the deep-toned ravine, appears the Bay of Biscay, tumbling and

sparkling as its wont is. This is a good preparation for St. Sebastian.

The St. Sebastian railway station was full of animation. The third-class passengers were gay, picturesque, and talkative. Everywhere arose the fumes of the cigarette. In the station, a woman presided behind a table covered with a white cloth, and spread with *aqua fresca*, *liqueurs*, and cigarettes. She had prepared rows of tumblers, in each of which stood a lump of porous sugar, about the size of a dinner-roll. Into these tumblers the *aqua fresca* was poured. The very porous sugar melted at once, and señor was served. This was mild refreshment; but it appeared to satisfy the travellers of Spanish extraction. Frenchmen prefer coffee, Madeira, soups, and little carafons of wine.

Immediately on emerging from the station, the rock and fortress of St. Sebastian, with the wild sea beating round it, bursts upon the sight. Behind lie the mountains, stretching peak above peak, to the north and east. There is a majestic rise of rock opposite the citadel; and between their two eminences the noble Atlantic waves roll into the town, and make their thunder heard, now and then, down its narrow streets. In a railway omnibus, dirty within and without, and driven by a driver who had made up his mind

not to be behindhand in the matter of dirt with his vehicle, we rolled and were bumped across a flat bridge —to the entrance to the ancient city; where some soldiers were respectfully touching their hats to two passing priests. These soldiers, and their comrades in the town, looked like very indifferent and tame French troops of the line, in snuff-coloured coats and white caps that were not their own. I would not venture upon a guess at their opinion on certain English and French folk who, on that day, were turned out of the muddy railway omnibus opposite the Fonda Nueva. Any work that was going forward among some masons at hand was stayed; a driver stopped his team of gentle oxen; people appeared at their doors. To these good citizens we were evidently quite as *outré* and amusing, as the Annamites were to the Parisians. They did not venture to feel the texture of our clothes, nor to mob us; but I am not certain they had not a mind to secure us as a capital beginning for a city collection of curiosities. I felt, at least, that we should have drawn had we been advertised by beat of drum. Under the fire of many dark eyes we turned into the town—resolutely bracing ourselves to bear the gaze of the inhabitants, and the various odours bottled within the fortifications of their dear old city.

St. Sebastian is a good specimen of a Spanish provincial town. It is silent and mournful—ill-paved, and ill-drained; and with a general air that it has seen its best days. The narrow streets are full of colour, and happy light and shade—with the pretty blinds tossed out of the high windows over the balconies; the churches are loaded with golden and graven images, and dolls in jewels, silks, and satins; people lie about in the heat, lazy and content as lizards; and life seems everywhere to be flowing so slowly and evenly, you can scarce catch a ripple on the tide. The sanitary commissioner has not been here. The wheelwright is still on his way by easy stages; for the waggons of ancient make have round boards for wheels. A water-cart is a butt lashed with willows upon wheels, and drawn at less than funeral pace through the streets. The pottery is of the middle ages. There are no spacious shop fronts of plate glass here. In the narrow streets are doorways, and there are a few articles in the ordinary private house windows. Is it a grocer of whom you are in search? You will see an immense hogshead filled with radiating lines of sardines presently. Are you in quest of a Spanish cigar? You will find one in the house, from the open doorway of which a bunch of tobacco leaves is sus-

pended. Your wine is being carried to the Fonda in one of those black pigskins. Your water for the table is borne along in one of those queer pails, upon the heads of those lively ladies, in livelier colours, who wear pigtails and bare legs. I was much amused with one of these St. Sebastian water-carriers. She wore a prodigiously long black and white tail! She had passed her fortieth year, and the white hair had stolen into the black! But conceive the gaiety of the old lady, who turned this mark of age into a pattern; who sported with a light heart a plaid pig-tail! I was watching this woman at the fountain, when a tall figure in black flitted gravely past me. He was habited like the Prince of Denmark, but his face was that of the illustrious Don Quixote. In that silent, spacious, lazy, sunny square of the Constitution—where the peaches and grapes are tumbled about amid the tomatos, and the squat fruit-women are dozing, or slowly knitting, as though time was not, and there were any amount of to-morrows to be passed in this way—had Sancho Panza appeared with his ass, I should not have marvelled. It is here that I realized, for the first time, the completeness of the truth that is in Gustave Doré's Spanish pictures. His groups of children; his corners alive with lean chickens; his sketches of

laziness, and of most pictorial rack and ruin—are now all realized to my mind. Those old ladies in black silk mantillas I saw stealing about the dark and solemn Church of the Trinity, are Doré's sitters every one; and the effect of the great citadel against the indigo blue sky—with the waves beating into the town, and the gulls almost touching the green blinds of the houses, with their wings—is not all this Doré's also? The scene, when Wellington was here in 1813, must have been a grand one; and many actors in it lie in the earth by the citadel—many of our British braves, who never lived to tell their friends at home, how great Wellesley drove Soult away from these glorious mountains. It was when the sun was setting behind the rock, that its gold made the waves liquid metal; and there were glances of emerald skies between the deep purple evening clouds; that the Pyrenees—each seemed to wear splendid jewels upon its peak—and St. Sebastian, made a mighty picture; such a picture as must live in the memory of every thoughtful man who had the good fortune to catch it.

The Fonda Nueva boasts a great *table d'hôte*, at which most dignified young ladies are the waiters. They will bear no smile, nor light word. Some Frenchman spoke playfully to them, and they

handed him the *olla podrida*, but answered not a word. One Frenchman had seated himself in a wrong place. A tall Spanish senora touched him on the shoulder, and haughtily motioned him to his proper seat. He laughed and obeyed, whispering to his friends, "*Quel tambour-major, sapristi!*" Another waitress was christened "the Duchess." The hand that offered you stewed cabbage (shall I ever forget the odour of it?) might have offered you castles and lands. The stately demoiselle who suggested to me a dish of veal and mushrooms, or beef with tomato sauce, might have graced a lordly château; and she who served the hard-boiled eggs, smothered in exquisitely flavoured cream, might have worn a diadem! The Spanish gentlemen were as grave as their countrywomen, and blew their cloud of smoke between the courses as though they were scattering incense. And so—on to Madrid, by Burgos and Valladolid, through much uninteresting country. Burgos has its charms for the antiquary, and its cathedral is a splendour for all. The tomb of the Cid is here, and the churches are many, and all interesting. For Valladolid, as for Madrid, the old and the present capital of Spain; all know that they are worth the toil and cost of travel, especially

when steam carries the traveller from Charing Cross or Pimlico, to Madrid. I hope I have shown the reader that, in addition to these two attractions tempting him forth; the way to them, is not without beauty or interest.

THE END.

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